the indian
MUSLIM

A Documentary Record Of Muslim Struggle For Independence.

1900 – 1947

7 Volumes

This is the second in the series of volumes which study the Muslim attitudes during the first half of the present century. This volume is exclusively devoted to the problem of separate electorate.

The agitation that followed the partition of Bengal in 1905 convinced the Government that their mighty *Raj* was 'intensely artificial and unnatural' and it doubted whether it would 'last'. Morley, the Secretary of State for India, planned his strategy to combat Indian Nationalism and announced his intention to introduce constitutional reforms in the popular direction. He suggested the Viceroy, Lord Minto, to take some practical steps towards substantial Indian representation in Viceregal Council, legislative councils and local councils.

Muslims felt that elections and nominations did not solve their problem. While elections meant the triumph of the majority, nomination by the government would undoubtedly bring influential Muslims not fitted to represent their community's interest. Therefore the Muslim leaders demanded reservation of seats for the Muslims and the creation of separate electorate. Ameer Ali in London met Morley and emphasised that under joint electorate 'Mahommedan opinion will lose all weight and influence; its usefulness will be lost to government and to the community and Mahommedan representation will become a farce'. The diffusion of western education among the Muslims had also created a desire in them to be associated with the administration of the country. Ultimately, the Government of India Act, 1909, granted separate electorate to the Muslims.

Whether the introduction of separate electorate marked the beginning of Muslim separation or it was the only expedient to avoid friction between the majority community and the Muslims is still an open question and the present volume provides important and rare documents on the subject

Rs. 1225.00

(7 Vols.)

ACCURATE PRINTERS
26-Paisa Akhbar Lahore

THE INDIAN MUSLIMS

A DOCUMENTARY RECORD

PROF. SHAN MUHAMMAD

Islamic Book Centre

H. O. 25, B, Masson Road
P.O. Box, 1625

Sales. 26, Paisa Akhbar.
Anarkali,

LAHORE

ALLIED BOOKS

★ The Aligarh Movement
(1864—1898)
3 VOLS.

★ Successors of
SIR SYED AHMED KHAN

★ UN-PUBLISHED LETTERS
OF ALI BROTHERS

THE INDIAN MUSLIMS

A Documentary Record of Muslim Struggle for Independence

(1900—1947)

VOLUME II

SEPARATE ELECTORATE

INTRODUCTION

In 1905 there was a change of ministry in England. The Liberals came to power and John Morley was appointed the Secretary of State for India. Inspite of the change, Lord Minto, still retained the Governor-Generalship of India and this presented a unique combination of conservative and liberal elements.

The Curzonian policy had created stir in India. He disregarded the National Congress and antagonised the people in general and Bengalis in particular. But Minto had a different approach. After the assumption of the Indian Viceroyalty, he contacted the leading Indians to know about the Congress and its programme and concluded that the British bureaucracy was faced with a massive revolution determined to uproot the very foundations of British rule in India. Hon'ble Gokhale's presidential address to the Indian National Congress in 1905 reiterated their goal as the attainment of a government similar to self-governing colonies of the British empire. It was a pointer to the way the air was blowing. Creation of the Extremist school alongwith the Moderates further made the situation tense and Indian nationalism was a subject of thorough discussion in the British Parliament.

Exchange of views between the Home government and the Indian government had convinced the officials that their mighty *Raj* was 'intensely *artificial and unnatural' in India* and they doubted whether it could 'possibly last'. Something was to be done to allay the reactionary forces in India and the outcome of their joint efforts was Morley's speech in the House of Commons regarding the constitutional reforms. It was this speech which prompted the Muslims to form a Deputation to Minto in 1906 and which in December the same year resulted in the formation of the All-India Muslim League at Dacca.

Morley wanted reforms in the popular direction to check the widening influence of politics making in-road in the masses. He suggested to Minto to take some practical and immediate steps towards substantial Indian representation in the Viceregal Council, Local Councils, Legislative Councils, and empowering them with full powers of discussing the budget which was not hitherto given to them. The strategy Morley planned was to combat Indian nationalism. Minto agreed to what Morley had felt and wrote to the Secretary of State : 'Ideas can only be combated by ideas, and you won't keep the younger generation away from the Congress unless you have another programme and another set of ideas to set up against theirs.'

With the intention of smoothening the agitational movement Minto took a start towards the reforms. He appointed a committee of his Executive Council known as the Arundel Committee, with a view to finding ways and means for Indian representation of the Councils. The subjects proposed

for Committee's consideration were (*a*) a Council of Princes, and should this be impossible, whether they might be represented in Viceroy's Council; (*b*) an Indian member for the Viceroy's Executive Council; (*c*) increased representation on the Viceroy's Council and on Local Government, and (*d*) prolongation of the budget debate and increased power of moving amendments.

The members of the committee represented diverse political opinion. But in course of time a unanimous official opinion gradually emerged in favour of the Indian representation in the above councils and the Government of India sent a despatch to the Home Government, suggesting the consideration of the scheme for representing Indian elements in the above councils. Muslims were not apathetic to it and when the proposals were under the consideration of the Home Government, they claimed that their interests regarding their representation in the Imperial and Provincial councils should receive due consideration by the Government. Elections and nominations did not solve the Muslim problem. While elections meant the triumph of the majority, nomination by the Government would undoubtedly bring influential Muslims not fitted to represent their community's interests. Hence they wanted that a certain number of seats be allotted to them both in the Imperial and Provincial councils and these should be filled by the votes of the members of their own community. While asking the Government to continue the current system of election applicable to the general body of the people, the Muslim leaders demanded reservation of seats for the Muslims and the creation of separate electorate.

When the Arundel Committee was discussing these proposals Mohsin-ul-Mulk, the organiser of the Simla Deputation, saw the Viceroy at Simla and convinced him of the advisibility of adequate Muslim representation. As a result of all this, the Government of India conceded that the Muslims were under-represented both on the Provincial and the Imperial councils and recommended to the Home Government, in its despatch of 21 March 1907, their due representation in view of their strength and political importance. The Home Government accepted the recommendations of the Government of India and conceded the Muslim demand of separate electorates. But Morley, pressurised by Lord MacDonell, later on, appointed a Reform Committee to study the scheme which gave its verdict in favour of joint electorate college which to Morley was 'as simple as any scheme for representation of minorities can ever be.' A storm of resentment among the Muslims appeared and they insisted that the separate electorate was the only device through which minorities could secure their adequate representation in the councils. Justice Ameer Ali, President of the London Branch of Muslim League, led a Muslim deputation to the Secretary of State, explaining to him the Muslim anxiety that in the mixed electorate system the Mahommedans so returned would be 'mere mandatories of the Majority, by whose good-will and support they secure their return; they would come pledged to the political programme of their supporters and constituents, they would be constantly at variance with their Mahommedan colleagues. The Mahommedan Party

will thus be split up into two factions, 'Mahommedan opinion will lose all weight and influence; its usefulness will be lost to the Government and the community, and Mahommedan representation will become an unedifying spectacle and a farce.' The official opinion in India also did not view with favour the Morley scheme and the clamour among the Muslims was so great that Morley had to stop thinking in that way. The conservative circles in Great Britain realised the seriousness of the situation and the King summoned Morley to an interview in which the question of the protection of Mahommedan interests was discussed. Consequently Morley had to modify his proposals. Assuring Ameer Ali, the leader of the Muslim deputation of the London Branch of Muslim League, Morley said, 'We are acting in earnest, with zeal and entire good faith, and any suggestion that any member of the Government, either in this office or the Government of India, has any prejudice whatever against Mahommedans, for the purpose of political administration in India, is one of the idlest and most wicked misapprehensions that could possibly enter into the political mind. I am greatly encouraged by having met you.' Soon after this the Government of India Act, 1909, was passed granting separate electorate to the Muslims.

Some scholars are of the view that separate electorate introduced Muslim separatism in Indian politics. The system has also been condemned and criticised by other communities on the ground that separate electorate on the basis of caste and creed was not known elsewhere in the British Empire, and would introduce a new element of discord and disunion in India. But history does not corroborate this view. The system of representation by caste or creed prevailed in the countries which had similar conditions like that of India. The system existed in Cyprus where the Muslims voted for themselves. It also existed in Bohema where the Germans voted alone. It was, therefore, not a political innovation in India. Conditions as prevailed at the close of the nineteenth century and towards the dawn of the twentieth century compelled the Muslims to demand it. A study of the whole period from 1862 to 1892—a period of constitutional reform—reveals that the Muslims were always under-represented and in the mixed electorate their ablest candidates had no chance of success. Further, between 1893 to 1906, the working of the elective principles had not fulfilled their expectations.

The Royal Commission on Decentralization in India, consisting of Europeans and Hindu Members, willingly supported the communal-representation. The Report of the Decentralization Commission said : 'We are in entire accord with Lord Ripon's resolution of 1882 as to the desirability of trying the methods of proportional representation and election by caste, occupation, etc. Having regard to the very different circumstances of different areas, we think it essential that the system adopted in each area should be such as to provide for due representation of different communities, creeds and interests.' It would not be out of place to mention that the Royal Commission found the class system to have worked satisfactorily in Rangoon and in some of the Punjab municipalities.

Under-representation of the Muslims had convinced them of the desirability

of a separate register enabling them to exercise the right of voting without any fear of being swamped by the majority. The diffusion of western education among the Muslims had naturally created a craving for western institutions in them, and also a desire to be associated with the administration of the country, which they could not avail of because of the mixed electorate as shown above. Lord Minto had accepted their claim put by the Simla Deputation in 1906 for a separate register and he extended his entire accord for it. In reply, he said : 'I am firmly convinced that any electoral representation in India would be deemed to mischevious failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of this continent...you point out.'

The apprehension as expressed by the opponents of separate electorate, that its introduction had created discord and disunion among the Hindus and Muslims is also unfounded. At the time it was considered a best expedient to avoid friction between the two communities and to facilitate the election of minority representatives to stand a fair chance in the local, district, municipal and legislative councils. Experience had proved that mixed system of election presented a poor manifestation of bad blood. The Hindus had dominated all walks of life from the court to the landlords and Muslim voters had to depend on the Hindu zamindars, creditors or lawyers. Separate electorate was needed, therefore, to prevent the influence of the Hindus and to enable the Muslims to elect their representatives according to their own liking. Local and district boards and municipalities were the bodies which had to perform primary function of civic life and the Muslims thought and also pleaded that they must get their due representation in the political life of the country. The Simla Deputation pointedly told about it and Minto very ably reviewed the situation and remarked : 'I agree with you that the initial rungs in the ladder of self-government are to be found in the municipal and district boards, and that it is in that direction that we must look for the gradual political education of the people.' It was this realisation that persuaded Minto to plead the case of Muslims for separate representation.

The Muslims did not put the demand of separate electorate gladly. Political conditions and the attitude of the majority community compelled them to do so. To most of the Muslim leaders separate electorate was a hateful necessity like that of divorce which was accepted by Islam as a hateful necessity. However good relations came out of the grant of separate electorate. Muslims were happy as they could now very easily elect their candidates to local bodies without any interference of the Hindu lawyers, creditors or the zamindars. It certainly lessened the rivalry between the two communities which had been at daggers drawn under the mixed electorate system and it proved so helpful that the Congress also accepted it in the Lucknow Pact of 1916.

CONTENTS

SECTION 4
SEPARATE ELECTORATE

SECTION 4

SEPARATE ELECTORATE

1

LETTERS FROM MINTO TO MORLEY

I
3 January 1906

I hope Mr. Gokhale's recent speech at the Indian National Congress Meeting at Benaras has been fully reported at home. From his point of view it was an extremely fine one. His ideas and his ambition certainly appear to me high spirited and patriotic, but one cannot disguise from oneself the risks that would surround popular representation to any large scale in the government of this country, whilst it is misleading to talk of the many population composing the people of Indian Empire as if they were one nationality, consisting, as they do, largely of warlike races far behind the Bengali standard of intellectual development but who would not for an instant put up with Bengali ascendancy in the administration of India.

II
9 May 1906

I see that the other day you were asked a question in the House as to my willingness to grant an interview to the representatives of the Congress, and you allude to such a possibility in your last letter to me. My inclination would certainly be to grant such an interview, although one would have to be careful about it. I think we are bound to look upon the Indian National Congress as a factor in Indian politics, and that it would be best not to ignore it. Gokhale probably represents the best elements in the Congress. On the other hand, there is much connected with it which may fairly be called disloyal, and even, whilst admitting the best of its ambitions to be good, its influence is often mischievously directed. At the same time I believe one can do a good deal by keeping in touch with such leaders as Surendra Nath Banerji and Moti Lal Ghose.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1905–06.

2

LETTER FROM MORLEY TO MINTO
11 May 1906

It was very good of you to sit down and write to me so fully on your tour, and I assure you it is all extraordinarily interesting to read about. Yesterday I had a long conversation with the Prince of Wales, in which he gave me an immensely interesting account of his impressions in India, and in the fore-front of them all was a picture of your room full and over-full of boxes and files of papers with red labels, blue labels, and other signals of urgency in various degrees. He pronounced you to be the most over worked man in whole Empire, and I suspect that it was no sort of exaggeration. On the other hand, he spoke of what must be a very considerable reward for all your toil—namely, the popularity and confidence that is rapidly surrounding your position; nor did he leave out Lady Minto's share in the good work.

He has come home with a good many very clear and—and as I should judge—correct and sound notions, all looking in what to my eyes seems to be emphatically the right direction. His keyword is that we should get on better if our administrators showed 'wider sympathy'. He spoke with very simple and unaffected enthusiasm of all that he had seen, of the reception he had met with in every quarter, and of the splendour of the task that we have in hand. Most of all was I delighted with his watchword. If we can show 'sympathy' as well as firm justice, all may go well, and it will be a vast help both to you and to me if the Prince's talk of sympathy is generally felt to hit the mark.

He talked of the National Congress as rapidly becoming a great power. As it happened, I had a short preliminary talk with Mr. Gokhale the day before (I shall have more by and by). My own impression formed long ago, and confirmed since I came to this office, is that it will mainly depend upon ourselves whether the Congress is a power for good or for evil. There it is, whether we like it or not. Probably there are many questionable people connected with the Congress. So there are in most great popular movements of the sort. All the more reason why we should not play their game by harshness, stiffness and the like. Mr. Gokhale is to stay in London until the end of the session, and I am in good hopes of finding him a help to me, and not a hindrance, in guiding the strong currents of democratic feeling that are running breast high in the House of Commons. Say what we will, the House of Commons is your master and mine, and we have got to keep terms with it. As Roosevelt said to me, 'I must try not to quarrel with Congress : If I do, I'm no use : Cleveland broke with Congress, and it was ruin of him.' You know that I will not yield an inch to them in the way of mischief—but the British Radical now prominent in the House of Commons does not mean

to lead him that way, if the said Gokhale is rightly handled. After my next interview with him, I shall tell you what passes. To Speak quite frankly, all depends on you and me keeping in step. I am convinced we shall, about frontier, army expenditure, Barisal, and all else that may arise. Only you must consider my difficulties, as I assuredly consider yours.

Source : Minto Papers: Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1905-06.

3

LETTER FROM LORD MINTO TO MORLEY

28 May 1906

As to Congress, I agree in all you say. As to our treatment of them, we must recognize them, and be friends with the best of them. Yet I am afraid there is much that is absolutely disloyal in the movement, and that there is danger for the future. I have no doubt you see extracts from the vernacular press, the great bulk of the tone of it can only be termed disloyal, and the Bengali Editor is spreading his influence throughout India. I like what I have seen of Gokhale, and am very far from saying he is in sympathy with much of his party literature, but he is playing with dangerous tools. I have been thinking a good deal lately of a possible counterpoise to Congress aims. I think we may find a solution in the Council of Princes; or on an elaboration of that idea, Privy Council not only of native rulers, but of a few other big men to meet, say once a year, for a week, or a fortnight, at Delhi for instance. Subject for discussion and procedure would have to be very carefully thought out, but we should get different ideas from those of Congress.... I have wondered too if it would ever be possible to start a small club, probably at Delhi, for British and Indian Members. I do not see the impossibility of it, but I am very ignorant as to the rules of caste.... I cannot say how much I am with you as to sympathy, if we could only get more into touch with the people we live amongst.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1905-06.

4

LETTERS FROM MORLEY TO MINTO

I

6 June 1906

Fundamental difference between us, I really believe there is none. But the spirit of English Institution is a different thing, and it is a thing we cannot escape, even if we wished, which I hope we don't. I say we cannot escape it because British Constituencies are, the masters, and they will assuredly insist—all parties alike—on the spirit of their own political system being applied to India. The party of ascendancy has broken down; no Unionist denies it. There is what Gokhale and his friends have found out, and you make a great mistake if you don't allow for the effect that they may produce in the press, on the platforms, and in the House of Commons. Cast-iron bureaucracy won't go on for ever, we may be quite sure of that; and the only thing to be done by men in your place and mine, is to watch coolly and impartially, and take care that whatever change must come, should come slow and steady, you and I am one in all that, I am sure....

Everybody warns, us that a new spirit is growing and spreading over India. Lawrence, Chirol, Sidney Low, all sing the same song. 'You can not go on governing in the same spirit, you have got to deal with the Congress party and Congress principles, whatever you may think of them : be sure that before long the Mahommedans will throw in their lot with Congressmen against you,' and so forth, and so forth. This is what they all cry out. I don't know how true this may or may not be. I have no sort of ambition for us to take part in any grand revolution, during my time of responsibility, whether it be long or short. Just the very opposite. You need have no apprehension whatever of a private telegram reaching you from we some fine morning, requesting you at once to summon an Indian *Duma*: On the other hand, I don't want to talk blindfold in the ways of bureaucracy, as the court a Peterhop and its precious Tchin has been walking blind fold in the ways of autocracy.

II

15 June 1906

Gokhale came for another interview. Though I don't know that he advances matters much, it brings what we all call Indian 'problems' more vividly before me—a great advantage to a Minister groping his way in dark places. I often wonder whether you, who are at close quarters with Indian

things, or I, who am further off, have the best advantage for seeing on British policy as a whole. Probably a free combination and discussion between the two is best of all.

I wonder whether we could not now make a good start in the way of reform in the popular direction. If we don't, is it not certain that the demands will widen and extend into 'National' regions, where I at least, look with a very doubting and suspicious eye ? Why should you not now consider as practical and immediate things – the extension of the native element in your Legislative Council : ditto in local councils; full time for discussing Budget in your Legislative Council, instead of four or five skimpy hours, right of moving amendments ? If I read your letters correctly, you have as disposition whatever to look on such changes as these in a hostile spirit quite the contrary. Why not, then, be getting reading to announce reforms of this sort ? Either you write me a despatch, or I'll write you one – by way of opening the ball. It need be no long or high flown affair. I suppose the notice of a native on your Executive Council would not do at all. Is that certain ? I dare say it is – and it would frighten that nervous animal (naturally nervous), the European-Indian....

Mr. Hewett will be able to tell you from his own observation, since he has been at home, what a strong tide of humanitarian feeling is running, and it is not going to run down in a hurry.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1905–06.

5

LETTER FROM MORLEY TO MINTO
22 June 1906

I agree with every word you say in your... page. Of course, we hold India by sword, though it is not good to say so. As we hold it by the sword, it is folly to shut our eyes to the various disagreeable necessities that such a state of things involves

You have seen the letter of Cromer to Grey about an article in the *Spectator* upon Pan-Islam....

I. also enclose you a note by Sir W. Lee Warner of a conversation with the Aga Khan. Along with this a note by Mr. Morrison, for several years head of the Mahommedan College of Aligarh, upon the possibility of Mahommedan sympathies by and by going over to the Congress party. Morison is particularly competent to speak upon such a matter.

The *Spectator* wrote in its issue of 12 May 1906 :

'It remains to be said that the action of the Sultan should warn us to take measures to counteract the claims made on his behalf to be regarded as the head of the Mahommedan religion. The question, we fully realise, is one of great difficulty and delicacy; but it seems to us that, if possible, we, as the greatest of Mahommedan powers, should convince our Mahommedan fellow-subjects that, when we withstand unjust claims on the part of the Sultan, we are in no way acting in opposition to Islam. We must do all in our power to dispel the notion that to withstand the Sultan is to attack the Mahommedan faith. Surely there are ways in which this might be done. For example, might it not be possible for us to give guarantee to the Mahommedans of India, Egypt, Persia, Morocco, and Northern Africa generally that we will at all cost secure the neutrality and safety of the Holy Places ? We do not, of course, suggest for a moment that we should occupy any portion of Arabia, but merely that we should let it be known that we consider the protection of Holy Places and freedom of access to them a paramount British interest. It might also be worthwhile to obtain from the most learned and enlightened of Indian and other Mahommedan scholars and lawyers, who are free from fear of the Sultan, an independent declaration as regards the khalifah. Should such independent representative of the Mahommedan faith declare that the Sultan is in truth the Khalifah, and so the spiritual Head of Islam, we should of course be obliged to bow to their decision. If, however, which is far more likely, they were to give their opinion against such pretentions on behalf of the chief of the Ottoman Turks, the position would have been very greatly simplified and we have some ground on which to base our policy in regard to the problem of Arabia and the Holy cities, a problem of cardinal importance in dealing with the Mahommedan. In any case, we must make an effort to reassure the adherents of the Mahommedan faith that they have, not enemies but friends and protectors in the British Empire and that no British Government will ever consent to any injury having done to the just rights and claims of the religion of Islam. The Sultan, no doubt, likes and pretends, that, when he is touched, all Islam is wounded, but we must try and as if we cannot correct this artfully propagated delusion. After all, it is Mecca, not Constantinople, which is the centre of the Mahommedan faith. It is towards the Kaabah, not towards the domes of St. Sophia that the Muslim turns his eyes as he prays.'

Theodore Morrison in his note said,

'Though a scattered community, they have a fairly active corporate (or national) life and there is a regular circulation of ideas among their social and religious leaders. Of this community, Aligarh is trying to become the intellectual capital, and it cheerfully accepts the role assigned to it by Sir A.P. MacDonnell that it should become 'the Cordova of the East and work out that religious, social and political regeneration of which neither Stamboul nor Mecca offer the prospect.' There are some local jealousies and provincial

interests in the way, and there used to be great distrust of the 'heresy' of Aligarh, but on the whole, but in the absence of other progressive movement the best Mussulmans all over India tend to join the Aligarh school of thought, these men don't live in Aligarh but cooperate from their homes, and keep in fairly close touch. So, if Aligarh is not yet the capital, it is at least the central office of the thinking Mahommedans and the people at the central office have, I suppose, everywhere considerable influence in making up the political programme. Well, it happens that the Mahommedans, as well as the English, at the central office at Aligarh have been against the Congress ever since 1887, very largely, I believe, because Sir Syed Ahmed took up this question. Sir Syed carried with him his own contemporaries and disciples who like him knew no English and who, though progressive, retained oriental habit of thought....

'But as the result of their efforts a generation of young Mahommedans is springing up, not only in Aligarh, but in all the big towns of Northern India which has learned English, and whose thoughts run easily in the Congress fold. For some time this young Mahommedan party has been restless, and it has only been kept to feel by the personal ascendancy of the leaders and the young Moslem's respect for his elders and latters. The young Mahommedan dislikes the Hindu so much, or even more than his father did, and therefore he is not very keen to join the Hindu leaders of the Congress, but he wants to start a Mahommedan party on the same lines as the Congress, to agitate for the same ends and pursue the same methods. Congress ideas are in the air, and you cannot keep them out of any people's eyes and ears when once they have begun to read English. Ideas can only be combated by ideas, and you won't keep the young generation away from the Congress unless you have other programme and another set of ideas to set up against theirs. There is not, as a matter of fact, any articulate conservative party in Indian politics to enlist the conservative elements against the Congress. The only alternatives offered are an indefinite continuation of a foreign autocracy and Representative Government, and I am not surprised at any Native thinking the last the... unpalatable.

'Therefore, in short, I don't think the Mussulmans will long stand out against the blandishment of the Congress, though Hindu and Mahommedan riots will continue. The chance of the present lies in the fact that they have not yet gone over, and if Government would indicate or imitate a moderately progressive policy which was not based on representation, it might capture Mahommedan support and enlist conservative Hinduism (e.g., of the Rajputs) on its side also.'

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1905-06.

6

LETTER FROM MINTO TO MORLEY

1 August 1906

...I am sure you know how thoroughly I am in accord with you in every desire to meet reasonable demands for reform, but though there are many honest men connected with the Congress movement, I cannot disguise from myself that we are every day being brought more face to face with absolutely disloyal intentions, the ultimate object of which is the overthrow of British administration. I know how serious these words are, but we must not blink the fact, and that the whole initiative emanates very largely from the so called Bengalee agitation under cover of plausible arguments claiming to be put forward on behalf of popular demands.... It is a growing danger, eagerly assisted by the vernacular Press, and what I want particularly to make clear is that I am convinced we have got to deal, not with an honest desire for administrative improvement, but with a deliberate attempt towards the ultimate overthrow of British rule.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1906.

7

LETTER FROM AFTAB AHMAD TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING MAHOMMEDAN REPRESENTATION

6 August 1906

At a time when the question of enlarging the scope of the Imperial Legislative Council, as far as it concerns the Indian element, is before the Imperial Government, it seems proper to point out that the interests of the Indian Mussulmans should receive special consideration on such an important occasion, and something should be done to secure their due representation in the Imperial and Provincial Councils of the country. Indian Members are appointed to these Councils either by nomination or by election, but so far as Mahommedans are concerned nomination has been almost the only means whereby their representatives have obtained seats in these councils and so long as the present system of election remains in force it is doubtful whether Mahommedans will ever have a fair chance of being duly represented either in

the Imperial or Provincial Councils. The reason is obvious, the majority of electors being Hindus, they naturally prefer to elect out their own community. As to appointment by nomination, its practical utility can easily be measured by the actual results. The Government naturally select those whom they regard as influential and deserving of official recognition, but such gentlemen, unfortunately, are not always the best fitted to represent the interests of their community. Thus neither election, as conducted at present, nor nomination are suited to the requirements of the Indian Mussulmans. Their position in this country demands, that a certain number of seats be alloted to them both in the Imperial and Provincial Councils, and those seats should be filled up by Mahommedan members elected by voters of their own community. This is not a new idea; this principle has already been adopted in some municipalities in the country. For instance, take the case of Aligarh. The whole town is divided into six wards and each ward has two members—one Hindu and one Mahommedan. The Hindu member is elected by Hindu voters living in the ward, and likewise the Mahommedan member is elected by the Mahommedan voters residing in that ward. In this way there is never any conflict between the two communities and yet the interests of both of them are duly represented on the Board. The same principle may be applied to the Imperial and Provincial Councils. I trust you will be pleased to give the above lines some space in your valued paper.

Source : **The Pioneer, 11 August 1906.**

8

LETTER FROM SOHAN LAL TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING MAHOMMEDAN REPRESENTATION

8 August 1906

There has of late been a strong controversy about the Mahommedan representation in the Legislative Councils. Mr. Aftab Ahmed Khan was the first to enter to arena of this discussion. He was followed by Mr. Manohar Lal and some other gentleman. Hafiz Abdurrahim, pleader of Aligarh, differed from him and made a proposal that the Mahommedan candidates be elected by Hindus and the Hindu candidates by the Mahommedan voters. His proposal is no doubt feasible, and will I think, be welcomed by the public at large. Bigoted candidates under such a plan would certainly have no chance whatever of entering the Legislative Councils and of advocating the cause of one community in suppression of others. This method, as

remarked by H. Abdurrahim, was tried by a magistrate and found useful. The system of selection by joint votes of Hindus and Mahommedans both is, I think, not so useful as one proposed by H. Abdurrahim.

I hope the system will find favour with the public in general and the voters in particular, upon whose shoulders lies the chief responsibility of electing persons who may be fit to represent their views in the Councils.

Source : The Pioneer, 2 September 1906.

9

LETTER FROM S. M. H. RIZWI TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER

17 August 1906

Those who have been carefully following the trend of public opinion, as represented by the British Parliament of to-day, as regards Indian interests will not be slow to deny that the Government party, influenced by the views of the Radicals of the type of Cottons and Wedderburns, have been looking at India with one eye shut.

Apparently they have not made a survey of political India from the Mahommedan stand-point as well. The demands of the Competition-wallas have so thoroughly engrossed their minds that no less a man than Mr. Morley with his profound learning and long training in the Gladstone school of politics, has come forward with an alarming speech.

At a time when Mahommedan India is greatly irritated at the grave injustice done to Sir B. Fuller by the Supreme Government by putting him into circumstances that forced him out of office, the last Budget speech of the present Secretary of State comes as a blow from above.

The entire Mahommedan population of the new province told the Government of India with one accord and in unmistakeable terms, that the Partition was a blessing to an over-whelming majority of the people of Eastern Bengal and Assam, and that Sir B. Fuller was a man in whom they had entire confidence. Yet owing to the Mahommedans abstaining from agitating the peace of the country they have lost all along the line.

Their most legitimate claims have been ignored and their just aspirations thwarted. Regard has been paid to agitation, encouragement has been offered to disaffection, and the bonds of security have been withdrawn from peace and contentment. The Government has, at the cost of its prestige, yielded to the empty threats of the lawless, ready to revolt; and loyalty has been taught

to seek consolation in humiliation and disgrace. All this is deplorable.

Mr. Morley says in his Budget speech : 'I have done my best to read the signs of to-day in India.' But the total ignorance displayed by him of the important position occupied by the Mahommedans in the land is shocking. His speech, has severely shaken the confidence of every thoughtful Mussulman in the ways of the Government. Mr. Morley seems to undo, with one breath, what a long-standing policy of the British rule in India has been able to achieve in the course of a century-and-a-half of laborious work done by administration from Clive down to Lord Curzon.

To Mr. Morley the Congress is the only trustworthy body representing all shades of opinion in India; and the demands of the Congress-wallas are the only legitimate demands. An extended representation of the non-official element in the Legislative Councils is one of the reforms Mr. Morley proposes to make in the system of the Indian Government. He has asked the Government of India to appoint a committee to enquire and report on the entire question.

The Mahommedans may well entertain grave apprehensions as to the finding of the committee, lest, in the absence of any political organisation of theirs to make their voice heard, their interests should be overlooked.

Passive as the Mahommedans are they cannot expect to receive a judicious treatment of their claims for representation in the councils at the hands of a committee to be appointed under a weak Government.

Mr. Morley says, 'I do not see or hear demands for violent or startling new departures.' He is willing to make every rational improvement in the Indian system of government. He rejoices and believes that the House will rejoice to know on his full responsibility that the Government of India is in thorough sympathy with the necessities of the day and of the hour. He wishes the House to know further that 'they are in earnest in the direction that he has indicated.' Only he hopes that there will be no hurry or precipitancy either on the part of the bureaucrats or of the competition-wallas. What does all this mean ? Does it not signify that the Congress-wallas will surely but gradually get what they ask for. Both the Government of India and the Secretary of State are for the agitators. They have already given way to the demands of the 'angry populus' in connection with the Partition of Bengal; and they are further willing to concede to them all they desire.

What should the Mahommedans do at this juncture ? The answer is obvious. Nothing short of making their voice re-echo from the lobbies in the House of Commons will secure them from the continual raids of the agitators.

Representation is not the only question that touches them. It is clear as the honest day that open competition is at their heels, and that the nightmare of simultaneous examinations in India may soon become a stern reality. The Government party is prepared to dance at the chorus of Mr. Morley. The labours of the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in rousing the conscience of the English nation to the peculiar position and needs of his co-religionists in India

are to be sacrificed to propitiate the Hindus. Mr. Morley has been led to believe that the feeling in the air—what he calls the new spirit—is the outcome of sound education and healthy training; and it should, therefore, be respected rather than feared. He thinks that it should be recognised with candour and consideration.

Show candour and consideration to it. Respect it by all means, and give it all possible encouragement. But before the Liberal party concedes to remodel the system of government in India to suit the demands of the new spirit, it should make sure whether such institutions do actually exist in the country which can produce men of high character worthy of the trust that may be committed to their charge. There have been men of exceptional merit at all times. There is no nation that even in its most primitive stages of civilisation has not claimed great men of its own. India, too, has its best men, but these can be counted on the fingers of both the hands. Yet some of its best men who have been favoured with a commissionership or even a membership of the Board of Revenue have hopelessly failed to show the very high degree of all round efficiency required for discharging their duties faithfully.

Thus failure on their part may be rightly attributed to the defective system of education that obtains in India.

Whatever may be the cause, if men are to be judged by their doings, it seems that bigotry, selfishness, and utter disregard for the feelings of those who do not accept the Congress programme in all its entirety, are among the important subjects prescribed for 98 per cent of the Congress-wallas in schools and colleges.

This is the advanced Indian society, and the Secretary of States for India is willing to concede to its members a greater number of higher appointments, and these again by competition.

The result of such a policy is known. Bribery will be encouraged, atrocities of all sorts will be committed with a fresh force, and caste prejudices will be inflamed with greater vehemence. The weak will, therefore, be crushed by the powerful; and the fate of the Mahommedans can be well foreseen.

The view that Mr. Morley has totally ignored the Mahommedans of India is strengthened by his, both directly and indirectly, attributing the new spirit to the competition-wallas. The Congress is there in his speech and the Hindu Senior Wrangler is there. But the great educational movement at Aligarh, to which tribute has been paid by Royalty, and one of the ablest sons of India—Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed, who is the recipient of Sir Isaac Newton's studentship, and whose academical attainments had therefore greater claims to be recognised—have been silently passed over.

It is high time that the Mahommedans should learn a lesson from the attitude and utterances of the almost pro-Congress Liberal Party. This is a crisis in the history of Indian administration; the events both in India and England have taken a turn which is alarming, and the Mahommedans cannot

but unite to safeguard against any encroachments upon their rights. Where are the Mehdis and Imams, the Shah Dins and Aftabs, Nasrullas and Nasims, and the Refiuddins and Karamat Hussains ? What are they thinking ? The opportunity has come for them to rise like the Muslims of old. India is not now for them a land of dreams. The interests of the silent millions of their co-religionists demand prompt and steady action on their part. They have already lost a great deal by passive loyalty. Let them now be active in the field. They should at once come on the political arena and fight out their battles abreast with the rest of the world; or the very existence of the Mahommedans in India will become a shadow and a name.

Source : The Pioneer, 22 August 1906.

10

LETTER FROM MINTO TO MORLEY

10 September 1906

I had a long talk yesterday with Arundel as to his committee. He tells me that Ibbetson represent, the old Tory; Baker the advanced Liberal; that Eric Richard is sitting on the fence, while he himself is a Liberal Unionist Baker, he tells me, goes so far as to see no objection to an opposition majority on Legislative Councils. This is the first I have heard of such a proposal, and to my mind it is entirely out of the question, it would entail the possibility of a frequent 'veto' by the Viceroy or Secretary of State, which could not but be fatal to our administration. The more I think of it, the more inclined I am for a Native Member on the Viceroy's Executive Council but I do not want to pledge myself to an opinion before the matter is threshed out, and there may be evidence that would decide one against it....

It would be quite impossible to place the great powers of a Lieut. Governor in the hands of a Native to carry on a provincial administration largely composed of British officers, and though theoretically one may argue that such a position should be possible, it would be quite impossible under the social condition existing in India.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State for India, 1906.

11

LETTER FROM M. H. KIRMANI TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING MAHOMMEDANS AND POLITICS

The famous Budget speech of Mr. Morley and the recent events connected with the resignation of Sir B. Fuller have brought once more to the front the question as to how far the Mahommedans should enter into the arena of politics. More than three decades have passed since the far-sighted Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, finding that the co-religionists in India did not realise the situation and were still consuming the midnight oil over what may be termed the old lamp of learning and that they were thus running far behind the race with other communities, roused the sulmbering minds of the Mahommedan community to the necessity of Western education and culture, and with this view he founded the M. A. O. College, Aligarh, which stands this day as the Alma Master and centre of Mahommedans' education and learning. The Mahommedans of India are fully alive to impetus thus given to the cause of modern education amongst the Moslems by that great sage. He rightly thought that the old school of thought must give place to new, and the battle of modern life must be fought with modern weapons, if success is to be achieved. Years ago when the so-called National Congress was at its zenith he clearly sounded a warning note and pointed out to the Mahommedans that the time was not ripe for them to join in the clamour of representative government and the like measures advocated by the Congress, and wisely advised them to pursue learning and not politics. It will indeed be a bad day if the Mahommedans even now were to entirely forget that memorable advice.

The Mahommedans must have some sort of political organisation of their own, for it is clear that they cannot join the so-called National Congress nor can they frame their minds like the authors of the scandalous Bengal seditious circular, and the organisers of the absurd ceremony of the coronation of Babu Surendranath. Hitherto the Mahommedans had their educational and social conferences in various parts of India, but a central organisation is now necessary for the political deliberations, to safeguard their own interests and to help to Government. It is for the leaders of the community to think and find out as to what form it should take.

Source : The Pioneer, 5 October 1906.

12

LETTER FROM MOHSIN-UL-MULK TO DUNLOP SMITH
7 October 1906

The members of the Committee appointed to consider what improvements may be effected in the constitution of the Legislative Councils, with especial reference to the strength and position therein of the non-official Members, were so good as to give me an opportunity of discussing with them the question of Mahommedan representation on those bodies, and I beg to state my views on the subject for submission to His Excellency's Government.

Both on the Supreme and the Provincial Councils an adequate number of seats should be reserved exclusively for the Mahommedans. The present system of election applicable to the general body of the people need not be interferred with, and it should remain open, as hitherto, to all communities. For the seats on the Legislative Chambers reserved for the Mahommedan community separate electorates should be created, and the franchise in their case may be distributed on the following basis ;

A—FOR THE PROVINCIAL COUNCILS

(1) Every Mahommedan British Indian subject paying income-tax on an income of Rs. 1,000 a year.

(2) Every Mahommedan landowner having a net rent roll of Rs. 1,000 a year, to be ascertained on the basis of Revenue assessments as obtaining in different Presidencies and Provinces.

(3) Every Mahommedan member of the Senate of a University.

(4) Every Mahommedan graduate of five year's standing, shall each have a vote, but no single individual should have more than one vote, though he may happen to combine several qualifications. With reference to (1) and (2), the standard might be adapted to the circumstances of each Province.

Each Presidency of Province should, where local conditions require it, be divided into two or more electoral divisions or constituencies in accordance with its particular needs and circumstances. Every one of these constituencies or a combination of them will be entitled to return a Member at each election, or by turns, as may be determined in view of the number of seats reserved on the particular Provincial Council. For instance, West Bengal ought to be divided into Bihar, and rest of West Bengal, the United Provinces, into Oudh, and the rest of that Province, and so forth. This, I think, is necessary in order to safeguard against an unequal distribution of the privilege. In this connection, it may also well be considered whether important cities like Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Lahore, Lucknow, Allahabad, Aligarh, Patna, and Dacca should not be given separate franchise so far as their Mahomme-

dan citizens are concerned. In every electoral division or constituency, each district should form a unit, but the number of votes which a particular district should be entitled to ought to be proportionate to the number of votes it may contain.

B—THE SUPREME COUNCIL

The Mahommedan Members of different Provincial Councils, and the Mahommedan Fellows of the Indian Universities, and Mahommedans having an annual income, say, of Rs. 25,000 a year should be given the right to elect men out of their own body, or outside it, for the seats reserved on the Supreme Council. But in order to make sure that the interests of the Mahommedans of any particular Province may not be over-looked, it will in my opinion be necessary to lay down that the choice of the electors should be confined in terms to the Mahommedan inhabitants of a particular Province or Provinces.

With regard to the registration of voters and the method by which votes ought to be recorded, or poll taken, these are matters of detail which I need not enter into.

The above outline of my views is neither full nor final and it is possible that, on further reflection, I may be in a position to make suggestions in addition to, or in modification of them.

REPLY FROM DUNLOP SMITH TO MOHSIN-UL-MULK

12 October 1906

I submitted your letter of the 7th to the Viceroy, in which you sketch various improvements proposed to be effected in the constitution of the Legislative Council, I am to thank you for this frank expression of the views of your Committee, and to inform you that a copy of your letter has been sent to the Committee of the Executive Council now sitting for their consideration.

The Viceroy will be glad to receive any further communication which you may find it possible to make on this subject later on.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.

13

LETTERS FROM MINTO TO MORLEY

I

28 October 1906

There are only two points which I may mention today. One is that in considering the possibility of a Native Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, one must consider the effects on British sentiment here of such a proposal. My own view is, as far as I at present know, that such a move would be by far the best answer we could make in reply to the demands that natives should have a greater share in the government of India, but I am inclined to think that British feeling in this country is not as yet ripe for such an advance in our methods of administration, and we cannot disregard that feeling. The proposal itself is quite new and the mere mention of it has taken many people aback. It is a possibility which I am sure will ripen as years go on though we may not be able to adopt it at present. Also as to the proposed increase in representation: We cannot do anything till we have taken in hand a rearrangement of the electorate of Municipalities and District Boards, which at present exert so great an influence on the election of Members to Legislative Councils.

II

4 November 1906

Tilak... has an evil reputation, and if he and his party gained control of the Congress.... we could not look upon them otherwise than as irreconcilably hostile to British rule. Gokhale's letters, are very remarkable. They are evidently honest, and the admission he makes as to the weakness of his own countrymen and the strength of our rule in India has impressed me much as coming from him..... I think myself much can be done in India by recognising the honest of the 'moderates' even though we may not agree with them. I should always be willing to meet the Congress Leaders provided they do not altogether, lose their reason. Our friendly recognition of a moderate Congress might, I believe, do much good. If the extremists, such as Tilak and Bepin Chandra Pal, gain the ascendancy it will be impossible to deal with them, and the Congress itself will split up.

Source: Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State for India, 1906.

14

LETTER FROM MORLEY TO MINTO
23 November 1906

Your letter (28th October) was brought into my library when I was listening to Arundel with whom I had three most instructive hours.... One thing he said which made me feel much at home with his committee. I rather think he had put it to you in the same way. Ibbetson he described as a sound Tory or official Whig; Baker as a Radical; himself as a Liberal Unionist, Richards as a lawyer of no pronounced political leanings off 'the fence'.... If you personally, and most of your Council, are adverse, it would undoubtedly be awkward for me to put pressure upon you to admit a Native. But then what would happen ? The scene would shift from your council to mine. Shall I be able to recast the demand, pretty certain to be made in our Radical House of Commons—to put a Native on to my Council ? Here the question arises whether it is better to put a Native on the Viceroy's Council in Calcutta, or the Council of the Secretary of State in Whitehall.... A Native here would soon become suspect to his own people in India, and he would be certain to get out of touch with them, and with the various currents.... If I put a Native on my Council would it be awkward for you to refuse to do the same. On the substance of the matter, and to put my present leanings plainly and shortly, I incline to think that the admission of a Native, whether to your Council or to mine, or to both, would be the cheapest concession that we can make. It would leave executive power as strong as absolute as it now is; and that the strength and decisive authority of executive power should remain wholly unimpaired, is to my mind the cardinal requirement of any reforming operations that we may undertake. One point that seems to me to deserve to have weight attached to it is this : One great mischief, as people of all sorts assure me, is the overbearing manners; I of the Europeans, not quite excepting officials. This arrogance would be perhaps a little, if it were only a little, softened by the presence of a Native in the seats of the Mighty. But I wouldn't at this stage inflict a treatise on you. I only wish you to know somewhat of my very fluid state of mind. No more important questions than those of Arundels committee have come up for many a long day; that at least is certain. Of course, you will take your own time in deciding on your Despatch. The House of Commons would call me to account before February and if you and I are not ready then, I should say so.... It is most desirable...that the Arundel report should remain a dead secret. Nor, I think, should we ever either promise or contemplate its publication. Of Arundel himself, I thought extremely well, in respect of fairness and liberality of mind. Would he be valuable here, I trust to your frankness.

Scheme for Representation of the Principal Communities in Indian

Society propounded by Sir William Lee Warner and Mr. Morison. Note appended to it.

'The plan which I submit for the consideration of Secretary of State in Council may be described as the outline of a scheme for granting the representative system upon an Indian stock, in lieu of further attempts to transplant our Western institution to the Indians and where it has hitherto withered. It is based upon the broad principle that Indian society lives, thinks, and acts according to castes, races and religions which have been proved to be stable organisations strong enough in the past to direct their actions in war, to shake their native system of administration, and guide their domestic and social affairs. I desire to use these natural compartments for the purpose of self-government, and as we are proposing to increase the size and powers of the Legislative Councils, the opportunity seems to me suitable for vitalising the Urban and District Boards which Lord Ripon did so much to promote. Upon these foundations we must build our superstructure and I want to translate into fact our often repeated professions 'that the more exponant races, classes, and interest should be represented.'

Mr. Morison was in agreement with Sir. W. L. Warner and remarked 'Experience has shown that where racial or religious feeling runs high between two groups living in the sáme area municipal elections, as at present conducted, give occasion for outbursts of religious animosity, but where, as in Aligarh the principle of representation by groups has been accepted, municipal elections give no occasion for those explosions of religious hostility which paralyse public life in India. I think that if the proposal which Sir W. L. Warner has outlined is carried into effect, public life in India would be free of much of the bitterness between different races and religious communities by which it is at present disfigured.' (18th April 1907.)

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State for India, 1906.

15

OPINIONS PRESSED ON THE APPOINTMENT OF AN INDIAN MEMBER ON THE VICEROY'S COUNCIL

To Sir John Edge it was harmful, 'I agree in the main with the reasons put forward by the majority of the Governor-General's Council. A Native member who had not been trained in Indian Civil Service would be useless for practical working purposes, and no Native could be found who would or could represent all parties.'

Sir Hugh Barnes in his confidential notes dated 15 April 1907 wrote.

'I am in entire agreement with the majority of Viceroy's Council. The measure, I believe, has never been suggseted by the Congress....The weight of the opinion against the measure is even more remarkable than the members.'

Sir Dennis Fitzpateich in his confidential notes 11 April 1907 said that 'the idea of oppointing whether European or Native to represent a particular class or a particular interest on the Executive Council is incompatible with the native and objects of that council. It may be added that a man so appointed would be expected by his own people to support their views, and would find it difficult at times to avoid doing so irrespective of the real merits of the case, and these would thus be introduced into the council a disturbing element from which it has hitherto been free.' In his confidential note Sir D. W. K. Barr 11 April 1907 said that he opposed it and that 'the proposal is fraught with grave risk and that it runs contrary to the determination which His Majesty expressed from the Throne that he would guard the strength and unity of the executive power in India.'

Source : Morley Papers : File entitled India Council Reform, 1906–07.

16

NOTICE

THE HON'BLE SIRDAR MAHOMMED YAKOOB KHAN C.I.E. ON 'HOW MAHOMMEDANS MIGHT OBTAIN DUE REPRESENTATION IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'

4 October 1906

1. The Mahommedan Deputation principally asked two things : *Firstly*, that in Legislative bodies, as well as in Local bodies in which representation is obtained by means of election, the number or Mahommedan representatives should be first fixed by the Government not only in consideration of their numerical proportion but of their political importance etc. *Secondly*, that with a view to render election of Mahommedan voters should be allowed to elect their own representatives separately. The reason for these demands have already been given in full and I believe have fairly well been understood. It may be added that the Memorial has further made clear that appointment by nomination is neither representation in its true sense nor satisfactory and fair to the interests of the community.

2. The fairness and justification of these demands, is practically recognised in the reply of His Excellency the Viceroy in the following words :

'The pith of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that in any system of representation—whether it affects a Municipality, a District Board, or a Legislative Council in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organisation, the Mahommedan Community should be represented as a community. You point out that in many cases electoral bodies as now constituted cannot be expected to return a Mahommedan candidate, and that if by chance they did so it could only be at the sacrifice of such a candidate's views to those of the majority opposed to his own community whom he would in no way represent; and you justly claim that your position should be estimated not only on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community, and the service it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you.'

3. However the question arises by what methods this 'just' claim of the Mahommedan community can be complied with. Necessarily detailed methods would have to be of workable and practicable shape. On this also His Excellency has very clearly expressed himself in the following :

'I make no attempt to indicate by what means the representation of communities can be obtained, but I am as firmly convinced as I believe you to be, that any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous results which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of this continent. The great mass of the people of India have no knowledge of representation. I agree, with you, gentlemen, that the initial rungs in the ladder of Self-Government are to be found in the Municipal and District Boards, and that it is in that direction that we must look for the gradual political Education of the people. In the mean time, I can only say to you that the Mahommedan community may rest assured that their political rights and interests as a community, will be safe-guarded in any administrative reorganisation with which I am concerned.'

'You will, I feel sure, recognise that it is impossible for me to follow you through any detailed consideration of the condition and the share that your community has a right to claim in the administration of public affairs. I can at present only deal with generalities. The points, which you have raised, are before the Committee which, as you know, I have lately appointed to consider the question of representation, and I will take care that your address is submitted to them.'

4. So it remains to be decided what actual share the Mahommedan community will be granted and by what methods, though it appears to be clearly recognised that the present share as well as the present methods have been unsuited and insufficient, I will here discuss the methods likely to be suitable and would reserve my remarks with regard to the actual share of the representation to be expressed separately.

As His Excellency has remarked, the foundation of election arrangements that will be looked for, will be found in the base-work of the local Boards

and Municipalities. It appears to be agreed on all hands that any increased representation on Legislative Council, will be based on the representative structure connected with these local bodies. In order to arrive at any clear idea of what will be possible to be done, we must first examine the methods by which representation is secured in those bodies. Municipalities are limited to the limits of large towns. These limits are divided into a certain number of wards, each of which is allotted, as a general rule, one representative to be elected by the number of voters, residing in the ward or possessing property therein. The qualifications of the voters have been prescribed by the local laws. The District Board as a general rule, is each confined to one district. But the election is first held for the Taluka Boards for purposes of which each Taluka is divided into a number of groups, say about six, and the voters in each group, whose qualifications are also prescribed by local laws, elect one member each group by majority of votes, from a general list of electors. The Taluka Board is formed of the representatives of the different groups situated in the Taluka, as well as of nominated members whose number is generally equal to the elected members. Then this combined body namely the Taluka Board consisting of elected as well as nominated members, sits to elect one representative for the District Local Board. This latter Board consists of as many elected representatives as there are Taluka Boards in the District, and so many nominated members besides. It need hardly be repeated that from a general list of electorate consisting of majority of others, it is impossible for Mahommedans to obtain due representation whether in Municipalities or Taluka or District Boards. I may further casually remark here, that the election by Taluka Board for a seat in the District Board, is not a pure and truly popular election because half the members in the Taluka Boards are not representative of the people being nominees of the Government. I mention this point here because it appears to me to be certain that the present local laws prescribing the methods of election will be altered, so this fact which is obviously inconsistent with true representation may attract notice when the acts are amended.

However our main point of consideration is how the Municipal and Local Board election should be made to be suitable to the interest of our community. The subject is difficult. At the first sight it appears to be an impossible task. It seems so puzzling that one feels much inclined to give it up hopelessly. But it must be remembered that if in a country like India, where such a large and important portion of population as the Mahommedans, cannot get practically and true representation in the administrative boards by the present method, and remembering also the keenness of racial differences that exist to a degree quite unknown in European Countries, if it were at all impossible to correct the present method in such a way as to save one important, loyal but proud community from being placed at the mercy of their antagonists, then government would have first to consider whether it, is politically safe to push on any further with present methods of representative institutions. The result of

its extension will be to place more power in the hands of one community and to make the injustice more keenly felt by the Mahommedan community. The more the present methods are extended or the longer they are allowed to continue the more will the endurance and patience of the Mahommedan community be taxed (a position which can hardly be looked upon with satisfaction by a just Government). However I feel that up to this time no determination or deliberate endeavour has been made to find out a way to render the system of election more fair to the Mahommedans. So greatly the thoughts and minds of the Administrators and responsible officers are taken up by European type of election that there is naturally a strong hesitation in accepting those radical changes which alone can render the election system suitable in India. It may take a long time to arrive at the correct method but the great question is neither to be shirked nor set aside hastily.

5. The following sketch attempts to lay down one or two possible ways by which the difficulties might be got over. Naturally it will be impossible to treat all presidencies or all parts of India by one hard and fast rule. There are several districts in which the number of Mussulmans is extremely small, and in parts of one or two Presidencies is so small that to the eye of the practical administrator, a great change would seem to be hardly worth the trouble. But there are provinces in which the number of Mahommedans is very considerable and on the whole in the majority of provinces the number of Mahommedans is indeed considerable, and their interests cannot be left as they are. Again in certain parts or in certain towns numerical strength of Parsees or Native Christians is also considerable and probably the administrators will feel disinclined to treat the interests of one community in a special manner and to deny the same considerations to other communities circumstanced similarly.

6. In municipalities and in Taluka Boards where the Mohammedan population is more than 10 per cent the Mahommedan electors should be allowed to elect their own representatives and they should be divided (territorially or otherwise) into as many groups as the number of representatives are allotted to the community in consideration of their numerical proportion and political importance etc. In like manner the Mahommedan members of the Taluka Local Boards should be allowed to elect as many representatives for the District Board as may be allotted to the community. The Mahommedan voters of the District should for this purpose be divided (territorially or otherwise) into a number of groups equal to the number of representatives allotted to the community on the District Board. In the same manner the Mahommedan members of the District Local Boards and large Municipalities should be allowed to elect as many representatives for the Provincial Legislative Council as will be allotted to the community, and they should be divided into as many groups (by districts and municipalities) as well as be equal to the number of representatives allotted to the community for the Provincial Council. In the same manner the elected Mahommedan

members of the Provincial Council should be allowed to elect as many Mahommedan members for the Viceregal Council as will be allotted to the community, and for this purpose more than one Province may be grouped together when necessary.

7. It will happen that in the Municipalities, Taluka Boards or District Boards, the majority of seats will be possessed by the Hindu community, as is the case now in many places, specially in Municipalities. The administration there, is really carried by the Hindus in consequence of it. The prevailing idea is to appoint Non-official president which honour falls mostly on Hindus and it becomes necessary for the authorities, in order to strengthen the hands of the president, to admit some of his partizens in the list of nomination also. In such Municipalities and often in the District Boards where the Hindu element predominates, vital interests of Mahommedans have suffered, and under the present law authorities are helpless. At any rate they cannot render help practically. I am strongly of opinion, that in India, in order to guard the interest of the minority there, should be a special provision in every enactment embodying the principle of self-Government. The special provision should be that in any Municipality or Local Board if 2/3 of the members belonging to one community (or such number of the people of that community as may appear to be sufficient) represent in writing that on account of the numerical preponderance of votes of the stronger community their interests have been prejudiced by a decision affecting their religious sentiments or vital interests, the Government or the Commissioner of the division should have power to stay the operation of the decision and to pass such order as may appear fit and just.

This is supported by a Resolution of the Indian National Conference held under the presidentship of Mr. Budrudin Tayebjee in which the Congress has held the principle that when all Mahommedans were to jointly oppose any decision the decision will not be operative or will be cancelled.

8. In Municipalities and Local Boards where the population of Mahommedans is less than 1/10, Government may, if it considers that the trouble in altering the system of electing will not be commensurable with the object, the change may not be made but the interests of the minority may be safeguarded by nomination and by the provision mentioned in the foregoing para.

9. The privileges which in the foregoing paragraphs are meant to be obtained for the Mahommedan community, may certainly be granted to any other community such as Parsees or Native Christians or Sikhs, in localities where their numerical strength is not less than one tenth; provided they choose to profit by this provision.

Accordingly the amendment of the law would deal alike with all the communities in one and the same manner and no invidious difference will be allowed to remain.

Source : The Aligarh Institute Gazette, 28 November 1906.

17

DESPATCH FROM MINTO TO MORLEY

8 February 1907

The scheme of electoral college... has been fully examined. All Governments are unanimous in their condemnation of the system, and lay stress on the fact that it has given rise to the gravest dissatisfaction among the classes affected by it, specially the Mahommedans and the land holders. The Mahommedan community attach great importance to the promise of separate representation that we made to them by the Viceroy in October 1906 and confirmed in the Home Department letter of August 1907.

The electoral college cannot be relied upon to give proportionate representation to the Mahommedan minority unless the popular electorate consisting of municipalities and local boards contains at least as large a proportion of Mahommedans as the electoral college itself. The Local Government show that this is not at present the case and that Mahommedans form a very small minority on these bodies.

The Government of Bombay observes that the principle of electoral college is peculiarly unsuited to the condition of Bombay where the Mahommedans are comparatively few and scattered, except in Sindh. In the rest of Bombay Mahommedans form usually one-tenth and consequently one-twentieth of the population, so that an electoral college of the kind proposed would place the minority entirely at the mercy of the majority if the Mahommedan votes are divided.

The Government of Bengal says that, owing to sectional jealousies, Mahommedans would find it difficult to act together, and that the votes of the college might be so manipulated as to bring in a Mahommedan of the stamp of Leakat Husain, a paid agitator, in the interests of a section of the Hindus.

The Governor of United Provinces says that these provinces are not sufficiently advanced for the system, that the Mahommedans would bitterly resent withdrawal of the concession of separate representation promised in 1906 and 1907, that they are entitled to larger representation than their numbers would give them... and that it is important to fulfill that promise as to make good the assurance given to the Mahommedans.

The Governme..t of East Bengal and Assam agreed generally with the criticism noticed above.

Source : Morley Papers : Proposals of the Government of India and Despatches of the Secretary of State.

18

LETTER FROM H. BUTLER TO DUNLOP SMITH
24 March 1907

The position, as I see it, is this, the political field in India is too narrow to hold permanently more than two parties – the party for the Government and the party against it. Hindus and Mahommedans may clash or combine, but, as education spreads, individuals will fall more and more into one or other party.

The party against the Government has split into two camps, the Moderates and the Extremists. For the time the Moderates are frightened and look to Government. I hold that it is of vital importance to get them on our side. Moderation does not last under the Indian sun. If the Government does not draw them to itself, the Moderates will turn to the Extremists, and the pressure of racial feeling will hurry them on their way.

We cannot stand still. What we do not give as of grace will be wrong from us soon of necessity. The influence of the progressive party grows.... The outlook, in my opinion is serious.

We should, I think, risk much to win over the Moderate. I see the difficulties of making an Indian Members of Council, but the object to be gained is worth the sacrifice, and I see no other way of gaining it.

European opposition might be reduced to a minimum by creating another portfolio... why not create an educational portfolio in development of the policy of nationalising education by making vernacular education free and why not make Gokhale the first Member.

Source **: Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1907.**

19

LETTER FROM MINTO TO MORLEY
16 May 1907

My firm belief is that the only way we can save India from a tremendous convulsion which may result, I know not how, is in recognising the right of the Indian gentlemen loyal at the present moment, to a greater share in the government of the country. We must get his support throughout India and he must work with us, simply in the sense of sharing with us responsibility

and power. Representative Government is not suited for India. We cannot move far in that direction and any move we make is merely a sop to impossible ambitions. Yet we must recognise individual ability and invite it to rule together with us. If we don't do so, we shall ere long have a force opposed to us of a strength of which we have had no previous experience. But you know all my ideas as to this. There is one point which people do not understand at home, and which has only in quite recent years become recognisable, viz., the disappearance of religious and race antipathies in view of the possibility of a united nationality. Many people at once object to the Native Member on the grounds that, if a Hindu is appointed, the Mahommedans would be irreconcilable and vice versa. I believe that it would no longer be so, and at the present moment either Mahommedans or Hindus would be ready to accept a representative Indian of either creed, I should so much like to know what Lord Cromer thinks of all this, how he thinks we are to maintain our rule here in the face of an ever-increasing educated class and ever increasing ambitions which it seems to me it will be utterly impossible for us to ignore.

Source: **Minto Papers : Correspondence with Secretary of State, 1907.**

20

LETTER FROM SYED ABDUL HAI TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER ON MAHOMMEDANS AND AGITATION

Sir, I am sorry to see the trouble occurring daily in connection with the demands of rights by the people of this country. I am, however, glad to find that the Mahommedans are in no way associated with these troubles. I can produce a *Hadees* (saying of the prophet) which throws sufficient light on the point. The *Hadees* shows that the Mahommedans should not take any active action against the rulers of the country, and should do nothing to cause embarrassment to them (rulers) even though the latter fail in their duty to grant the rightful claims. In the circumstances the Mahommedans should firmly stick to their present attitude towards Government. The *Hadees* referred to above will be found in the *Tirmizi Sharif* (one of the six reliable books of *Hadees*). 'Wael, son of Hajar, states a man, asked the Prophet (peace be on him) what course the people should follow if at any time the rulers enforce their own rights, but declined to grant those to the people. The reply was to the effect that the people should continue to obey orders because the rulers and the people will respectively reap as they will

sow. This *Hadees* is correct.' It must be remembered that in the *Hadees* the people are not prohibited from demanding their rights, but they are enjoined not to do anything against the rulers. I am therefore of opinion that there is no objection to ask the Government for the grant of rights, but with respect and expressions of loyalty.

Source : The Pioneer, 19 May 1907.

21

THE PRESS ON THE ENLARGEMENT OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS

The *Vakil*, an Urdu bi-weekly of Amritsar, writes : The plans for the enlargement of Legislative Councils and for giving the people of India an extended share in the Councils of State, which were being discussed by the Indian Secretary and Lord Minto, and which the public was waiting for with considerable eagerness, have at last been published. The Despatch is a most important one, and the explanatory remarks contained in it bear ample testimony to Lord Minto's sense of justice, his enlightenment and foresight. While acknowledging the mental and moral progress made by the people of India and their right to be entrusted with greater political responsibilities, the Government have decided not to weaken their own power to keep the peace in the least. This intention of the Government is most wise and statesmanlike, considering the conflicting interest and ambitions that sway the inhabitants of this land. True statesmanship in India requires that non-official views should not prevail over the views held by the responsible rulers of the land. The final decision in all matters must, therefore, remain with constituted powers. Another welcome fact, which is clearly visible in the Despatch, is the desire of the Government to safeguard the interests of minorities, so as to prevent any single preponderating section of the people from tyrannising over its weaker neighbours. We (Moslems) thank the Government for listening to our prayers.

The *Paisa Akhbar*, a leading Urdu daily of Lahore, writes : By their wisdom and foresight, Lord Minto and Mr. Morley have saved the country from great impending evils. The Government's Despatch has, no doubt, caused much disappointment in Congress circles, but that is because the Congress is no longer a 'National' body, but a Hindu Congress. Besides it is possible that Hindu organs in the Press may disapprove of the proposed Reforms, because they provide for the representation of minorities. But if a

comprehensive view of things be taken, the proposals will be found not at all objectionable. Mahommedans should rejoice that although they are kept out of politics, yet their prayers have been readily listened to. Just as the year 1857 was particularly unfortunate for Islam in India, the year 1907 is remarkably auspicious.

The *Watan*, an Urdu (Moslem) weekly of Lahore, writes : It has been found that the excessive presence of schoolmasters and lawyers in the Legislative Councils is not wholesome for the country. To maintain balance, it is intended to give the landholders and other wealthy people of the land their proper share in the Councils of State. Also, in accordance with the representations made by the Mahommedan deputation, the Government have decided to reserve four seats in the Viceregal Council for Moslems. It has not been decided how many seats will be reserved for Moslems in Provincial Councils, and we entertain a fear lest we should be prevented from getting a chance of duly representing our peculiar interests. Moslem public bodies should lose no time in drawing the attention of Government to this. The idea that the numerical preponderance of Moslems in East Bengal and the Punjab will enable them to send up their own co-religionists to the Councils of their provinces by the ordinary method of election, is quite wrong. Our poverty and ignorance will prevent us from reaping the full benefit of numerical strength.

The *Aligarh Institute Gazette* writes : The proposals for the enlargement of Councils and for giving the people of India a more liberal share in their country's Government which were being discussed between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State and which the Indian public were looking forward with considerable eagerness, have at last been published. Moslems should rejoice over the news that the Government have kept in view the representations made by their deputation and have safeguarded their interests We cannot sufficiently thank the Government for its goodness in this instance. We hope to publish the full text of the Despatch later on, so that our people may have a chance of forming a collective view as to the merits of the same.

Source : The Pioneer, 13 September 1907.

22

LETTER FROM MINTO TO MORLEY
21 August 1907

When the draft circular of the Bill of 1909 reached Minto he wrote to Morley :

The most weighty criticism of it is that it over-accentuates our wish for Mahommedan representation and disregards that of other classes. I cannot say I think so very strongly myself, as one of our main objects has been to secure a better representat'on for the Mahommedan community, and that being so, I do not well see how we could avoid the prominence given to their interests. However, we cut out the word 'Mahommedan' wherever its omission did not affect the spirit of the draft.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1907.

23

LETTER FROM NAWAB MUZAMMILULLAH KHAN TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEDR REGARDING THE REFORM OF THE COUNCILS
31 August 1907

All India must be busy pouring over the epoch-making despatch of the Government of India to all Local Governments and administrations embodying proposals for the creation of an Advisory Council and the expansion of the Legislative Councils. No more important document has, one may take it, emanated from the Secretariat of the Government in recent times. Perhaps it would be difficult at this stage to gauge adequately the results of the far-reaching changes contemplated in the despatch, nor would it be an easy matter to study the full effects of their bearing on the direction of Indian opinion until true perspective is gained in the light of later experience. It is, however, easy enough to see from the broad outlines of the Reforms and the principles underlying them, how far the 'step forward' has been taken, and whether, so far as it goes, it meets the genuine needs of the country. Those who have been crying loudest for 'Reforms' and posed as the only representatives of public opinion, men who have, through the strange irony of circums-

tances, hitherto dominated in the Councils of the country, will be smitten sore with disappointment and characterise the Reforms proposals as reactionary and designed to muzzle the only 'intelligent and articulate' actions of the country. It is only natural that they should do so, for none can think of relinquishing power with equanimity, especially when it is not his by virtue of right. But to the great bulk of men of real weight and influence, the Reform proposals would mean the initiation of quite a new era in the administration of Indian affairs, big with enormous possibilities for the future, and opening up wide spheres of usefulness for those, who by heredity and instinct, no less than by natural position, are competent to realise the aspirations of the people. If carried out in their entirety, the great achievement of the Reforms would be that they would dethrone sham and imposture from the seats of power and influence, and exalt the true leaders and representatives of the community. This achievement alone would constitute a gain of incalculable magnitude, and we may be sure by this lable magnitude, and we may be sure by this means all the factors of progress will be brought together for the development of India and its organic growth.

The principle, that in any scheme purporting to widen the basis of representation in the Councils, the authority of the Executive must remain supreme and inviolable is, no doubt, based on foresight and wisdom; and none can quarrel with the anxiety of the Government to preserve it intact as the first postulate in any scheme of remodelling the political institutions of the country. No sensible Indian can for a moment think of weakening the authority of the Executive under the existing Indian conditions. One is glad to find, therefore, that the Government has frankly stated it as the fundamental principle of the British rule, that may not be tempered with. And I need hardly say that this firm declaration of policy will carry assurance to millions who were otherwise apprehensive lest the Government should give way to the full throated self-assertiveness of bogus statesmen and surrender some of its powers to those who are more intolerant and fanatical in their attitude towards differing views and opinions than the fanatics and intolerant zealots of old. The great problem of India, the one question that has been thought to be insoluble, is how to combine the diverse elements of Indian population for a united effort towards the advancement of the people as a whole. No community of interest worth the name has yet been created; and no comprehensive scheme of progress can be evolved without arousing the latent jealousies and antagonisms of different races and creeds. Common association in the Legislative work of the country can, however, offer some solution for the problem; and the proposed reforms reflect the wise statesmanship of H. E. Lord Minto in that they aim at securing the fullest representa tions of all the diverse classes and interests in the country. An all round comprehensiveness is the dominant note in the expansion scheme of the Councils.

Further the desire of the Government to bring the trained hereditary

talent to bear on the administrative problems by giving voice and scope to the views of Ruling Princess and territorial magnates is a wise extension of the principle that only those who enjoy the confidence of the people should enjoy the confidence of the Government. The council Chamber may not resound to the same extent with that sonorous 'manuscript eloquence' of the orthodox type, but it will bring together the gallaxy of silent, strong men of action, and men like the late Sir Syed Ahmed and Sir Madho Rao, who through sheer force of personality could inspire so much confidence in the rulers of the country and thus contribute more good to the country than the platform speeches of the present generation.

One great feature of the contemplated Reforms is the well-merited recognition that has been given to the claims of the landed aristocracy as the natural leaders of the masses. This great and most influential class has the greatest stake in the country, and rightly enough it ought to have a powerful voice in the Indian Councils commensurate with its weight as a most important factor in the State. This is the only class which may well represent the real needs and requirements of the sons of the soil in a most sober and respectful attitude. Hitherto the great landlords have remained in the cold shade of neglect, and failed to exercise their due influence, mainly because they abhor the art of self-assertiveness, of which some classes of recent origin have become past masters. But they are not wanting in the necessary aptitude and ability to become the legislators of the country. And though they may not be able to show enough B. A.'s in their ranks, many of them possess sounder judgement and more intimate knowledge of the needs of the country than the glib 'intellectuals' who have talked themselves into politicians and statesman. The Government by encouraging the landholding class will be strrngthening the stable and essentially conservative forces.

The reserving of four seats for Mussulmans in the Imperial Council must be a welcome concession to the community although a greater number of seats, say atleast one Mahommedan from each Province, was desired and hoped for, and might have been given without any possible detriment to the interests of others, especially now that it is proposed to raise the total number of the seats in the Imperial Legislative Council. Perhaps there may be some angry and jealous criticism against even this most necessary concession; one may only hope that its bare justice will be patent to those who are aware of how difficult it must be for a Mussulman to get into the Council through election in the face of an unsympathetic majority.

In conclusion I may be permitted to say that the Reform Proposals when finally carried out will mark an epoch in the history of political development in this country, and the name of the Earl of Minto will go down to posterity as the great Reformer who restored equilibrium and balance to diverse forces that govern the conditions of Indian political life. Let us hope that with these reforms will begin an era of steady and peaceful development. The Despatch is now before the Local Government for their consideration, and

indicates the line over which suitable schemes for the expansion of the Provincial Legislative Councils might advantageously be drawn up with due regard to the local needs and requirements of the different provinces. We trust that our most respected provincial rulers will thoroughly enter into the spirit of the Government of India's suggestions, and will thus show their appreciation of the main principles outlined in a practical manner.

Source : The Pioneer, 8 September 1907.

24

LETTER FROM M. RAFIUDDIN AHMAD AND EBRAHIM ADAMJEE PEERBHOY TO THE NAWAB MOHSIN-UL-MULK

2 September 1907

The important despatch of the Government of India on administrative reforms, approved by the Secretary of State and recently circulated among all the Provincial Governments by Sir Harold Stuart marks a new era in the administration of British India and the annals of the Mahommedan community. That generous satisfaction by every member of our community, *first*, because it is a sincere and timely attempt on the part of the Government of India to respond to the practical ideals of liberty and progress which are stirring the natural leaders of all classes and sects in this country, and *secondly*, because no mean space is devoted in the document to the special consideration of our exceptional position as a community, and the enactment therein of provisions for due and adequate protection of the great Mahommedan minority in India.

Upon the ultimate satisfactory settlement of the details of the proposed reforms, depends, not a little, the fate of His Majesty's Indian Mahommedans subjects and we have no doubt that the worthy members of the historic Deputation will devote in their respective provinces (as we ourselves propose to do here shortly) their best efforts to the settlement of the intricate questions involved in the reform scheme, in accordance with local requirements of the Moslems in their respective provinces.

There will be time enough for us, during the next few months to consider the proposed great change in the distribution of political power in this country, and its possible bearings upon the fortunes of our community. Meanwhile, we think, and we have little doubt that our fellow members in other parts of India will agree with us, that it is the duty of the members of the Deputation collectively to tender their sincere and grateful thanks to His

Excellency the Viceroy for the due fulfilment of the promises which His Excellency held out to them on the 1st of October last. We venture to submit that at a most critical period in the history of British India Lord Minto has, with the foresight and courage of a real statesman, of his own accord, set forth a scheme of reforms which will, in the main, command the approval of all moderate and sober leaders of public opinion in India, and we have no doubt whatsoever that His Excellency's name will be enrolled with those distinguished sons of Great Britain who have from time to time served to consolidate the foundations of British rule in India.

Of course, individual members of the Deputation, as well as other Moslem representatives, will send their grateful thanks to the Viceroy from their respective provinces, but we submit the occasion demands the tendering of the united thanks of all the members of the Deputation as an authoritative expression of national gratitude to Lord Minto on behalf of Mahommedan India. For this purpose we are convinced that in the absence of our distinguished President, His Highness the Aga Khan, there is no one in India who is more eminently fitted by age and experience than yourself, and we beg you, therefore, to be good to take early steps in order to carry out this national obligation. Knowing as we do that the great Deputation owed its inception, as well as its glorious success, mainly to yourself, and witnessing as we have done your incessant work and the consequent strain upon your physical resources for weeks before the reception of the Deputation by the Viceroy, permit us, Nawab Sahab, to offer our hearty congratulations to you upon the splendid result which has now crowned your self-sacrificing zeal and noble efforts.

Source : The Pioneer, 7 September 1907.

25

LETTER FROM MIRZA SHUJAAT ALI KHAN TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING THE PROPOSED REFORMS

17 September 1907

The Mahommedans have been greatly gratified at the concessions made to them by the new order. Constituted as Indian Society is, no scheme of reforms in the Imperial and Provincial Councils of the country can meet the growing political needs of India, unless the different classes and races are adequately represented. It is with this object that the All-India Mahommedan Deputation waited on His Excellency at Simla on the 1st October 1906, and the sympathetic reply—which it elicited from the Viceroy—has made the day

memorable in the annals of the Mahommedans of India. The statesman like document of reform of Lord Minto, which has received the approval of the Secretary of State, will be read with genuine satisfaction by every member of the Mahommedan community. Under the present system of election comparatively a few Mahommedan members have been represented and their representation has not been commensurate with the Mahommedan population, and its political status and historical importance in the country.

The Scheme, therefore, which embodies the adequate representation of all interests should be welcome to India, and to all Indians. It will mark an epoch in the political regeneration of all races inhabiting India. It now remains for the Mahommedans of different provinces to consider carefully the details of the intricate questions involved in the scheme of reform, and to carefully consider the proposed changes, and the distribution of political power in this country. We have a few months before us for the consideration of the subject, but mean while we will be wanting in our duty if we do not collectively offer our grateful thanks to H. E. the Viceroy for the statesman like measure he has taken to safeguard the interests of the Mahommedans, who occupy numerically, politically and historically an important position among the Indian subjects of His Majesty. I was a member of the All-India Deputation to H. E. the Viceroy, and I venture to propose that a petition containing an expression of our gratitude and our genuine gratification, should be circulated among all the members who formed the deputation in October last from the different provinces in India. This petition should be submitted to H. E. the Viceroy by a small deputation consisting of a member from each province in the country. I have written on the subject to Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk who organised the last deputation, and I am sure my appeal will be responded to enthusiastically.

Source: The Pioneer, 22 September 1907.

26

LETTER FROM MORLEY TO MINTO

28 May 1908

No one is more anxious for reforms than I am, and I have told you, as you say, that there is a new spirit in the Indian political atmosphere. And so there is. But at the same time government by the strong hand is what appeals to the majority of the different populations of this country. Moreover, the anarchy which the Calcutta conspirators have aimed at has nothing to do with

a spirit of honest reform, but is the result of impressions produced on the effeminate but imitative Bengali mind by the influences of anarchists far removed from India, whilst the emotions of the same Bengali race are worked upon by people like Mr. Nevinson and certain Members of the British House of Commons.

I am quite ready to join in admiration of British Parliamentary history (the History of both Houses), but the modern House of Commons is absolutely incapable of understanding Indian humanity and the influences of many creeds and traditions, and is to my mind perhaps the greatest danger to the continuance of our rule in this country. Still we must accept existing conditions and do our best, and if we move forward carefully now recognizing what is honest and genuine in the demand for reforms we may do much good.

Source : Martin Gilbert, *Servant of India*.

27

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA REFORM DESPATCH TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

1 October 1908

EXRACTS

20. To the principle thus affirmed by both Houses of Parliament Lord Landsdowne's Government endeavoured to give us wide a scope as was then possible, in the regulations framed by them for the constitution of the Provincial Legislative Councils. In the letters addressed by them to Local Government on the 15th August, 1892, they enumerated the interests which seemed to be of sufficient importance to require representation and indicated the manner in which the seats' to be filled by recommendation should be allotted so as to secure the object in view. The question of the direct representation of those interests on the Imperial Legislative Council did not at that time arise, as it was believed that the non-official members of the Provincial Legislative Councils, as reconstituted under the regulations then about to be made, would form a sufficiently wide electorate forthe Supreme Council. This electorate, however, while it was worked advantageously in the case of one class, can hardly be said to have afforded proportionate representation to the other interests concerned. Of the non-officia members elected to the Imperial Council since 1893, 45 per cent have belonged to the professional middle class, the land-holders have obtained 27 per cent of the seats, and the

Mahommedans only 12 per cent; while the Indian mercantile community, a large and increasingly important body, have had no representative at all. The advance of English education, and the demand of influential classes and interests for representation on a more ample scale, now render it necessary to examine the whole subject in the light of the experience of the last fifteen years and to treat it on more liberal and comprehensive lines than we have hitherto been able to follow. With the enlargement of the Imperial Council it ceases to be possible to rely exclusively on a single source of recruitment. New constituencies must be formed, and in framing them we have to consider what section of the population can properly claim representation for British India as a whole....

30. Representation of Mahommedans : All Local Governments approved of the proposals for the special representation of Mahommedans which were made in our letter of 24th August, 1907. These proposals are, as a rule, adversely criticised by the Hindus, who regard them as an attempt to set one religion against the other, and thus to create a counterpoise to the influence of the educated middle class. Some Hindus, however, recognize the expediency of giving special representation to the Mahommedan community, and the Bombay Presidency Association, while they object strongly to the creation of a special Mahommedan electorate, make provision in their scheme of a Council for the election of two members by the Mahommedan community. Notwithstanding their formal protest against the principle of religious representation, the Association doubtless realizes that the Indian Mahommedans are much more than a *religious body. They form, in fact, an absolutely separate community, distinct by marriage, food and custom, and claiming in many cases to belong to a different race from the Hindus.*

The first question is, how many seats should be allotted to the Mahommedan community. After carefully considering the demands of the Mahommedan themselves and views expressed by the Hindus, we think that the claims of the former will be adequately met if four elective seats are assigned to them and provision made for a fifth seat being filled by nomination until suitable machinery for election can be devised. The four elective seats should be permanently assigned to the four provinces which have the largest Mahommedan population, namely, Bengal, Eastern Bengal and Assam; the Pubjab and the United Provinces. The fifth seat should be given alternately to Bombay and Madras, where the Mahommedan population is smaller, and for this it will be necessary to have recourse to nomination until satisfactory electorates can be formed. The question of a Mahommedan electorate presents much the same difficulties as the formation of a landholding electorate. In most provinces the Mahommedans are in favour of election and regard nomination as an inferior method of obtaining admission to the Legislative Council. The Governments of Madras and the United Provinces propose electorates, based upon property and partly upon literary qualification, which appear to us to be well devised, but the former Government has since expressed a preference for

nomination. The Mahommedans of Bombay are said to be widely scattered over the Presidency and at present unorganised for common purposes, so that a special electorate cannot be created. In course of time, it may be possible to arrange for election by a central association, but for the present their proportionate representation can be secured only by careful nomination. The Government of Bengal proposes a scheme of a similar character which includes graduates of five years' standing and holders of recognized titles; both of these are doubtful features. The Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam suggest that the Mahommedan representatives should be elected by the Provincial Mahommedan Association. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab considers it impossible to form a Mahommedan electorate, and proposes that the Mahommedan representative should be nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor. We would deal with the question in the same way as we have proposed to deal with the representation of the Landholders. Our view is that in Provinces where election by a regular Mahommedan electorate is feasible that method should be adopted; that Mahommedan associations should be made use of where electorates cannot be formed; and that nomination by Governmer should be restored to where neither of the first two methods is practicab' It will be for the Local Government to determine, in consultation with e leaders of the Mahommedan community, which plan should be adopted.

28

LORD MORLEY'S ANNOUNCEMENT ON PROPOSED REFORMS

17 December 1908

I feel that I owe a very sincere apology to the House fo the disturbance in the business arrangements of the House, of which I have been the cause, though the innocent cause. It has been said that in the delay in bringing forward this subject, I have been anxious to burke dissussion. That is not in the least true. The reasons that made it seem desirable to me that the discussion on this most important and far-reaching range of topics should be postponed, were—I believe the House will agree with me—reasons of common-sense. In the first place, discussion without anybody having seen the Papers to discussed, would evidently have been ineffective. In the second place it would have been impossible to discuss those Papers with good effect—the Papers that I am going this afternoon to present to Parliament—until we know, at all events in some degree, what their reception has been in the country most immediately concerned. And then thirdly, my Lords, I cannot

but apprehend that discussion here—I mean in Parliament—would be calculated to prejudice the reception in India of the proposals that His Majesty's Government, in concert with the Government of India, are now making. My Lords, I submit those are three very essential reasons why discussion in my view, and I hope in the view of this House, was to be deprecated. This after-noon your Lordships will be presented with a very modest Blue-book of 100 or 150 pages, but I should like to promise noble Lords that to-morrow morning there will be ready for them a series of Papers on the same subject, of a size so enormous that the most voracious or even carnivorous appetite for Blue-books will have ample food for augmenting the joys of the Christmas holidays.

The observations that I shall ask your Lordships to allow me to make, are the opening of a very important chapter in the history of the relations of Great Britain and India; and I shall ask the indulgence of the House if I take a little time, not so much in dissecting the contents of the Papers, which the House will be able to do for itself by and by, as in indicating the general spirit that animates His Majesty's Government here, and my noble friend the Governor-General, in making the proposals that I shall in a moment describe. I suppose, like other Secretaries of State for India, I found my first idea was to have what they used to have in the old days—a Parliamentary Committee to inquire into Indian Government. I see that a predecessor of mine in the India Office, Lord Randolph Churchill—he was there for too short a time—in 1885 had very strongly conceived that idea. On the whole I think there is a great deal at the present day to be said against it.

Therefore what we have done was in concert with the Government of India, first to open a chapter of constitutional reform, of which I will speak in a moment, and next to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the internal relations between the Government of India and all its subordinate and coordinate parts. That Commission will report, I believe, in February or March next, —February, I hope,—and that again will involve the Government of India and the India Office in White Hall in pretty laborious and careful inquiries. It cannot be expected—and it ought not to be expected—that an Act passed as the organic Act of 1858 was passed, amidst intense excitement and most disturbing circumstances, should have been in existence for half a century without disclosing flaws and imperfections, or that its operations would not be the better for supervision, or incapable of improvement.

I spoke of delay in these observations, and unfortunately delay has not made the skies any brighter. But, my Lords, do not let us make the Indian sky cloudier than it really is. Do not let us consider the clouds to be darker than they really are. Let me invite your Lordships to look at the formidable difficulties that now encumber us in India, with a due sense of proportion.

What is the state of things as it appears to persons of authority and of ample knowledge in India ? One very important and well-known friend of

mine in India says this—

'The anarchists are few, but, on the other hand, they are apparently prepared to go any length and to run any risk. It must also be borne in mind that the ordinary man or lad in India has not too much courage, and that the loyal are terrorised by the ruthless extremists.'

It is a curious incident that on the very day before the attempt to assassinate Sir Andrew Fraser was made, he had a reception in the college where the would-be assassin was educated, and his reception was of the most enthusiastic and spontaneous kind. I only mention that, to show the curious and subtle atmosphere in which things now are at Culcutta. I will not dwell on that, because although I have a mass of material, this is not the occasion for developing it. I will only add this from a correspondent of great authority—

'There is no fear of anything in the nature of a rising, but if murders continue, a general panic may arise and greatly increase the danger of the situation. We cannot hope that any machinery will completely stop outrages atonce. We must be prepared to meet them. There are growing indications that the native population itself is alarmed, and that we shall have the strong support of native public opinion.'

The view of important persons in the Government of India is that in substance the position of our Government in India is as sound and as well-founded as it has ever been.

I shall be asked, has not the Government of India been obliged to pass a measure introducing pretty drastic machinery ? That is quite true, and I, for one, have no fault whatever to find with them for introducing such machinery and for taking that step. On the contrary, my Lords, I wholly approve, and I share, of course, to the full the responsibility for it. I understand that I am exposed to some obloquy on this account—I am charged with inconsistency. That is a matter on which I am very well able to take-care of myself, and I should be ashamed to detain your Lordships for one single moment in arguing about it. Quite early after my coming to the India Office, pressure was put on me to repeal the Regulation of 1818, under which men are now being summarily detained without trial and without charge, and without intention to try or to charge. That, of course, is a tremendous power to place in the hands of an Executive Government. But I said to myself then, and I say now, that I decline to take out of the hands of the Government of India any weapon that they have got, in circumstances so formidable, so obscure, and so impenetrable as are the circumstances that surround British Government in India.

There are two paths of folly in these matters. One is to regard all Indian matters, Indian procedure and Indian policy, as if it were Great Britain or Ireland, and to insist that all the robes and apparels that suit Great Britain or Ireland must necessarily suit India. The other is to think that all you have got to do is what I see suggested, to my amazement, in English print—

to blow a certain number of men from guns, and then your business will be done. Either of these paths of folly leads to as great disaster as the other. I would like to say this about the Summary Jurisdiction Bill—I have no illusions whatever. I do not ignore, and I do not believe that Lord Lansdowne opposite, or anyone else can ignore, the frightful risks involved in transferring in any form or degree what should be the ordinary power under the law, to arbitrary personal discretion. I am alive, too, to the temptation under summary procedure of various kinds, to the danger of mistaking a headstrong exercise of force for energy. Again, I do not for an instant forget, and I hope who so loudly applaud legislation of this kind do not forget, the tremendous price that you pay for all operations of this sort in the reaction and the excitement that they provoke. If there is a man who knows all these drawbacks I think I am he. But there are situations in which a responsible Government is compelled to run these risks and to pay this possible price, however high it may appear to be.

It is like war, a hateful thing, from which, however, some of the most ardent lovers of peace, and so of those rulers of the world whose names the most ardent lovers of peace most honour and revere—it is one of the things from which these men have not shrunk. The only question for us is whether there is such a situation in India to-day as to warrant the passing of the Act the other day, and to justify resort to the Regulation of 1818. I cannot imagine anybody reading the speeches—especially the unexaggerated remarks of the Viceroy—and the list of crimes perpetrated, and attempted, that were read out last Friday in Calcutta—I cannot imagine that anybody reading that list and thinking what they stand for, would doubt for a single moment that summary procedure of some kind or another was justified and called for. I discern a tendency to criticise this legislation on grounds that strike me as extraordinary. After all, it is not our fault that we have had to bring in this measure. You must protect the lives of your officers. You must protect peaceful and harmless people, both Indian and European, from the blood-stained havoc of anarchic conspiracy. We deplore the necessity, but we are bound to face the facts. I myself recognise this necessity with infinite regret, and with something, perhaps, rather deeper than regret. But it is not the Government, either here or in India, who are the authors of this necessity, and I should not at all mind, if it is not impertinent and unbecoming in me to say so, standing up in another place and saying exactly what I say here, that I approve of these proceeding and will do my best to support the Government of India.

Now a very important question arises, for which I would for a moment ask the close attention of your Lordship, because I am sure that both here and elsewhere it will be argued that the necessity, and the facts that caused the necessity, of bringing forward strong repressive machinery should arrest our policy of reforms. That has been stated, and I dare say many people will assent to it. Well, the Government of India and myself have from the

very first beginning of this unsettled state of things, never varied in our determination to persevere in the policy of reform.

I put two plain questions to your Lordships. I am sick of all the retrograde commonplaces about the weakness of concession to violence and so on. Persevering in our plan of reform is not a concession to violence. Reforms that we have publicly announced, adopted, and worked out for more than two years—how is it a concession to violence, to persist in those reforms? It is simply standing to your guns. A number of gentlemen, of whom I wish to speak with all respect, addressed a very courteous letter to me the other day that appeared in the public prints, exhorting me to remember that Oriental countries inevitably and invariably interpret kindness as fear. I do not believe it. The Founder of Christianity arose in an Oriental country, and when I am told that Orientals always mistake kindness for fear, I must repeat that I do not believe it, any more than I believe the stranger saying of Carlyle, that after all the fundamental question between any two human beings is—Can I kill these, or canst thou kill me? I do not agree that any organised society has ever subsisted upon either of those principles, or that brutality is always present as a fundamental postulate in the relations between rulers and ruled.

My first question is this. There are alternative courses open to us. We can either withdraw our reforms, or we can persevere in them. Which would be the more flagrant sign of weakness—to go steadily on with your policy of reform in spite of bombs, or to let yourself openly be forced by bombs and murder clubs to drop your policy? My second question is—Who would be best pleased if I were to announce to your Lordships that the Government have determined to drop the reforms? Why, it is notorious that those who would be best pleased would be the extremists and irreconcilables, just because they know well that for us to do anything to soften estrangement, and appease alienation between the European and native populations, would be the very best way that could be adopted to deprive them of fuel for their sinister and mischievous designs. I hope your Lordships will agree in that, and I should like to add one reason which I am sure will weigh very much with you. I do not know whether your Lordships have read the speech made last Friday by Sir Norman Baker, the new Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, in the Council at Calcutta, dealing with the point that I am endeavouring to present. In a speech of great power and force, he said that these repressive measures did not represent even the major part of the true policy dealing with the situation. The greater task, he said, was to adjust the machinery of Government, so that their Indian fellow-subjects might be allotted parts which a self-respecting people could fill, and that when the constitutional reforms were announced, as they would be shortly, he believed that the task of restoring order would be on the road to accomplishment. For a man holding such a position to make such a statement at that moment, is all the corroboration that we need for persisting in our policy of reform. I have

talked with Indian experts of all kinds concerning reforms. I admit that some have shaken their heads; they did not like reforms very warmly. But when I have asked, 'Shall we stand still, then ?' There is not one of those experienced men who has not said, 'That is quite impossible. Whatever else we do, we cannot stand still.'

I should not be surprised if there are here some who say : You ought to have very strong machinery for putting down a free Press. A long time ago a great Indian authority, Sir Thomas Munro, used language which I will venture to quote, not merely for the purpose of this afternoon's exposition, but in order that everybody who listens and reads may feel the formidable difficulties that our predecessors have overcome, and that we in our turn mean to try to overcome. Sir Thomes Munro said :

'We are trying an experiment never yet tried in the world—maintaining a foreign dominion by means of a native army; and teaching that army, through a free Press, that they ought to expel us, and deliver their country.'

He went on to say—'A tremendous revolution may overtake us, originating in a free Press.'

I recognise to the full the enormous force of a declaration of that kind. But let us look at it as practical men, who have got to deal with the government of the country. Supposing you abolish freedom of the Press or suspend it, that will not end the business. You will have to shut up schools and colleges, for what would be the use of suppressing newspapers, if you do not shut the schools and colleges ? Nor will that be all. You will have to stop the printing of unlicensed books. The possession of a copy of Milton, or Burke, or Macaulay, or of Bright's speeches, and all that flashing array of writers and orators who are the glory of our grand, or noble English Tongue—the possession of one of these books will, on this peculiar and puerile notion of government, be like the possession of a bomb, and we shall have to direct the passing of an Explosives Books Act. All this and its various sequels and complements make a policy if you please. But after such a policy had produced a mute, sullen, muzzled, lifeless India, we could hardly call it, as we do now the brightest jewel in the Imperial Crown. No English Parliament will ever permit such a thing.

I do now think I need go through all the contents of the despatch of the Governor-General and my reply, containing the plan of His Majesty's Government which will be in your Lordships hands very shortly. I think your Lordships will find in them a well-guarded expansion of principles that were recognised in 1861, and are still more directly and closely connected with us now by the action of Lord Landsdowne in 1892. I have his words and they are really as true a key to the papers in our hands as they were to the policy of the noble Marquess at that date. He said :

> We hope, however, that we have succeeded in giving to our proposals a form sufficiently definite to secure a satisfactory advance in the representation of the people in our Legislative Councils, and to give effect to the

> principle of selection as far as possible on the advice of such sections of the community as are likely to be capable of assisting us in that manner.

Then you will find that another Governor-General in Council in India, whom I greatly rejoice to see still among us, my noble friend the Marquess of Ripon, said in 1882 :

> It is not primarily with a view to the improvement of administration, that this measure is put forward; it is chiefly desirable as an instrument of political and popular education.

The doctrines announced by the noble Marquess opposite, and by my noble friend, are the standpoint from which we approached the situation and framed our proposals.

I will not trouble the House by going through the history of the course of the proceedings—that will be found in the Papers. I believe the House will be satisfied, just as I am satisfied, with the candour and patience that have been bestowed on the preparation of the scheme in India, and I hope I may add it has been treated with equal patience and candour here; and the end of it is that, though some points of difference arose, though the Government of India agreed to drop certain points of their scheme—the Advisory Councils, for example—on the whole there was remarkable agreement between the Government of India and myself as to the best way of dealing with these proceedings as to Legislative councils. I will enumerate the points very shortly, and though I am afraid it may be tedious, I hope your Lordship will not find the tedium unbearable because after all, what you are beginning to consider to-day, is the turning over of a fresh leaf in the history of British responsibility to India. There are only a handful of distinguished members of this House who understand the details of Indian Administration, but I will explain them as shortly as I can.

This is a list of the powers which we shall have to acquire from Parliament when we bring in a Bill. I may say that we do not propose to bring in a Bill this session. That would be idle. I propose to bring in a Bill next year. This is the first power we shall come to Parliament for. At present the maximum and minimum numbers of Legislative Councils are fixed by statute. We shall come to Parliament to authorise an increase in the numbers of those Councils, both the Viceroy's Council and the Provincial Councils. Second, the members are now nominated by the head of the Government, either the Viceroy or the Lieutenant-Governor. No election takes place in the strict sense of the term. The nearest approach to it is the nomination by the Viceroy, upon the recommendation of a majority of voters of certain public bodies. We do not propose to ask Parliament to abolish nomination. We do propose to ask Parliament, in a very definite way, to introduce election working alongside of nomination with a view to the aim admitted in all previous schemes, including that of the noble Marquess opposite—the due representation of the different classes of the community. Third, the Indian Councils Act of 1892 forbids—and this is no doubt a most important prohibi-

tion—either resolutions or divisions of the Council in financial discussions. We shall ask Parliament to repeal this prohibition. Fourth, we shall propose to invest legislative Councils with power to discuss matters of public and general importance, and to pass recommendations or resolutions to the Indian Government. That Government will deal with them as carefully, or as carelessly, as they think fit—just as a Government does here. Fifth, to extend the power that at present exists, to appoint a Member of the Council to preside. Sixth, Bombay and Madras have now Executive Councils, numbering two. I propose to ask Parliament to double the number of ordinary members. Seventh, the Lieutenant-Governors have no Executive Council. We shall ask Parliament to sanction the creation of such Councils, consisting of not more than two ordinary members. and to define the power of the Lieutenant-Governor to overrule his Council. I am perfectly sure there may be differences of opinion as to these proposals. I only want your Lordships to believe that they are accepted by the Governor-General in Council.

There is one point of extreme importance which, no doubt though it may not be over diplomatic for me to say so at this stage will create some controversy. I mean the matter of the official majority. The House knows what an official majority is. It is a device by which the Governor-General or the Governor of Bombay or Madras, may secure a majority in his Legislative Council by means of officials and nominees. And the officials of course, for very good reasons, just like a Cabinet Minister or an Under-Secretary, whatever the man's private opinion may be, would still note, for the best of reasons, and I am bound to think with perfect wisdom, with the Government. But anybody can see how directly, how palpably, how injuriously, an arrangement of this kind tends to weaken, and I think I may say even to deaden, the sense both of trust and responsibility in the non-official members of these councils. Any body can see how the system tends to throw the non-official member into an attitude of peevish sulky, permanent opposition, and, therefore, has an injurious effect on the minds and characters of members of these Legislative Councils.

I know it will be said—I will not weary the House by arguing it, but I only desire to meet at once the objection that will be taken—that these councils will, if you take away the safeguard of the official majority, pass any number of wild-cat bills. The answer to that is that the head of the Government can veto the wild-cat Bills. The Governor-General can withhold his assent, and the withholding of the assent of the Governor-General disallowed a Bill passed by a Local Government which I need not name, with the most advantageous effect. I am quite convinced that if that Local Government had had an unofficial majority the Bill would never have been passed, and the Governor-General would not have had to refuse his assent. But so he did and so he would if these gentlemen, whose numbers we propose to increase and whose powers we propose to widen, chose to pass wild-cat Bills. And it must be

remembered that the range of subjects within the sphere of Provincial Legislative Councils is rigorously limited by statutory exclusions. I will not labour the point now. Any body who cares, in a short compass, can grasp the argument, of which we shall hear a great deal, in Paragraphs 17 to 20 of my reply to the Government of India, in the Papers that will speedily be in your Lordships' hands.

There is one proviso in this matter of the official majority, in which your Lordships may, perhaps, find a surprise. We are not prepared to divest the Governor-General in his Council of an official majority. In the Provincial Councils we propose to dispense with it, but in the Viceroy's Legislative Council we propose to adhere to it. Only let me say that here we may seem to lag a stage behind the Government of India themselves—so little violent are we—because that Government say, in their despatch— 'On all ordinary occasions we are ready to dispense with an official majority in the Imperial Legislative Council,' and to rely on the public spirit of non-official members to enable us to carry on the ordinary work of Legislation.' My Lords, that is what we propose to do in the Provincial Councils. But in the Imperial Council we consider an official majority essential. It may be said that this is a most flagrant logical inconsistency. So it would be, on one condition. If I were attempting to set up a Parliamentary system in India, or if it could be said that this chapter of reforms led directly or necessarily up to the establishment of Parliamentary system in India, I, for one, would have nothing at all to do with it. I do not believe—it is not of very great consequence what I believe, because the fulfilment of my vaticinations could not come off very soon—in spite of the attempts in Oriental countries at this moment, interesting attempts to which we all wish well, to set up some sort of Parliamentary system it is no ambition of mine, at all events, to have any share in beginning that operation in India. If my existence, either officially or corporeally, were prolonged twenty times longer than either of them is likely to be, a Parliamentary system in India is not at all the goal to which I would for one moment aspire.

One point more. It is the question of an Indian member on the Viceroy's Executive Council. The absence of an Indian member from the Viceroy's Executive Council can no longer, I think, be defended. There is no legal obstacle or statutory exclusion. The Secretary of State can, to-morrow, if he likes, if there be a vacancy on the Viceroy's Council, recommended His Majesty to appoint an Indian member. All I want to say is that, if, during my tenure of office, there should be a vacancy on the Viceroy's Executive Council, I should feel it a duty to tender my advice to the King that an Indian member should be appointed. If it were on my own authority only, I might hesitate to take that step, because I am not very fond of innovations in dark and obscure ground, but here I have the absolute and the zealous approval and concurrence of Lord Minto himself. It was at Lord Minto's special instigation that I began to think seriously of this step. Any how, this

is how it stands, that you have at this moment a Secretary of State and a Viceroy who both concur in such a recommendation. I suppose—if I may be allowed to give a personal turn to these matters—that Lord Minto and I have had as different experience of life and the world as possible, and we belong I dare say to different schools of national politics, because Lord Minto was appointed by the party opposite. It is a rather remarkable thing that two men, differing in this way in political antecedents, should agree in this proposal. We need not discuss what particular portfolio should be assigned to an Indian member. That will be settled by the Viceroy on the merits of the individual. The great object, the main object, is that the merits, of individuals are to be considered and to be decisive, irrespective and independent of race and colour.

We are not altogether without experience, because a year ago, or somewhat more, it was my good fortune to be able to appoint two Indian gentlemen to the Council of India sitting at the Indian Office. Many apprehensions reached me as to what might happen. So far at all events, those apprehensions have been utterly dissipated. The concord between the two Indian members of the Council and their colleagues has been unbroken, their work has been excellent, and you will readily believe me when I say that the advantage to me of being able to ask one of these two gentlemen to come and tell me something about an Indian question from an Indian point of view, is enormous. I find in it a chance of getting the Indian angle of vision, and I feel sometimes as if I were actually in the streets of Calcutta.

I do not say there are not some arguments on the other side. But this, at all events, must be common sense—for the Governor-General and the European members of his Council to have at their side a man who knows the country well, who belongs to the country and who can give him the point of view of an Indian. Surely, my Lords, that cannot but prove an enormous advantage.

Let me say further, on the Judicial Bench in India everybody recognises the enormous service that it is to have Indian members of abundant learning, and who add to that abundant learning a complete knowledge of the conditions and life of the country. I propose at once, if Parliament agrees, to acquire powers to double the Executive Council in Bombay and Madras, and to appoint at least one Indian member in each of those cases, as well as in the Governor-General's Council. Nor, as the Papers will show, shall I be backward in advancing towards a similar step; as occasion may require, in respect of at least four of the major provinces.

I wish that this Chapter had been opened at a more fortunate moment; but as I said when I rose, I repeat—do not let us for a moment take too gloomy a view. There is not the slightest occasion. None of those who are responsible take gloomy views. They know the difficulties, they are prepared to grapple with them. They will do their best to keep down mutinous opposition. They hope to attract that good will which must, after all, be the real foundation of

our prosperity and strength in India. We believe that this admission of the Indians to a larger and more direct share in the government of their country and in all the affairs of their country, without for a moment taking from the central power its authority, will fortify the foundations of our position. It will require great steadiness, constant pursuit of the same objects, and the maintenance of our authority, which will be all the more effective if we have, alongwith our authority, and the aid and assistance, in responsible circumstances of the Indians themselves.

Military strength, material strength, we have in abundance. What we still want to acquire is moral strength—moral strength in guiding and controlling the people of India in the course on which time is launching them. I should like to read a few lines from a great orator about India. It was a speech delivered by Mr. Bright in 1858, when the Government of India Bill was in another place. Mr. Bright said :

'We do not know how to leave India, and therefore let us see if we know how to govern it. Let us abandon all that system of calumny against natives of India which has lately prevailed. Had that people not been docile, the most governable race in the world, how could you have maintained your power there for 100 years ? Are they not industrious, are they not intelligent, are they not, upon the evidence of the most distinguished men the Indian service ever produced, endowed with many qualities which make them respected by all Englishmen who mix with them ?...I would not permit any man in my presence without rebuke to induige in the calumnies and expressions of contempt which I have recently heard poured forth without measure upon the whole population of India....The people of India do not like us, but they would scarcely know where to turn if we left them. They are sheep, literally without a shephered.'

However, that may be we at least at Westminster here have no choice and no option. As an illustrious Members of this House wrote :

'We found a society in a state of decomposition, and we have undertaken the serious and stupendous process of reconstructing it.'

Macaulay, for it was he, said—

'India now is like Europe in the fifth century.' Yes, a stupendous process indeed. The process has gone on with marvellous success, and if we all, according to our various lights, are true to our colours, that process will go on. Whatever is said, I for one—though I am not what is commonly called an Imperialist—so far from denying, I most emphatically affirm, that for us to preside over this transition from the fifth European century in some parts, in slow, uneven stages, up to the twentieth—so that you have before you all the centuries at once as it were—for us to preside over that, and to be the guide of peoples in that condition, is, if conducted with humanity and sympathy, with wisdom, with political courage, not only a human duty, but what has been often and most truly called one of the most glorious tasks ever confided to any powerful State in the history of civilised mankind.

Source : Viscount Morley, *Indian Speeches.*

29

LETTERS FROM MINTO TO MORLEY

I

24 December 1908

The scheme had received wide spread applause. The only part of the scheme as to which I have doubts is the electoral college. I have not myself had time to analyse it, but I hear general prophesises that it will not work, the Mahommedans are taking exception to it—and—this is gossip, but there may be something in it.

II

31 December 1908

The Times then goes on to doubt if Mahommedan interests have been sufficiently safeguarded in our reform scheme, and it strongly deprecates admission of Indian Member to Viceregal Council.

As to Mahommedan representation, I have already written to you that I have doubts as to the practical working of the 'electoral college'. I puzzled out its machinery as far as I could by myself last Monday, and have since been over it in detail with Risley. People have unfairly somewhat jumped to the conclusion that you have instructed us to accept the scheme—whereas you have merely commended it to our consideration. But the Mahommedans are already in arms about it, and an examination of the conditions, which must effect their election as advised, will, it seems to me, certainly established the reasonableness of their objections. To put it briefly, they say that large Hindu majority will enable Hindus not only to elect their own man but a Mahommedan as well, and that being so a Mahommedan may be elected representative of advanced Hindu political inclinations, and not at all of bonafide Mahommedan interest. Moreover, to old fashioned Mahommedans, who are such a loyal mainstay to us, are not likely to push themselves forward and will be left in the lurch if opportunity is given for the election of manipulated Hindu votes to secure seats for a younger Mahommedan generation that is being drawn into the vortex of political agitation. My reply to Mahommedan address (at Simla, 1 October 1906) is often quoted... I must say I think unjustifiably in the face of what I had said. Clarke threw over the representation of communities in his reply to the Deccan Provincial Moslems League (23 September 1908) and consequently aroused a great deal of Mahommedan ill-feeling and suspicion...I enclose an angry cutting from the Observer, a Mahommedan organ, setting forth the arguments I have mentioned, also a report of the Presidents address to the 'All-India

Moslem League.' What he says in conclusion is very true as to the hearing obtained by two Hindu countrymen in England. They have an attractive gift of the gale, but we must remember that, though the Mahommedan is silent, he is very strong.

Source : Minto Papers : Letters from Minto to Secretary of State, 1908.

30

THE ALL-INDIA MOSLEM LEAGUE : CRITICISM OF THE NEW REFORMS

Khan Bhadur Yusuf Shah, President of the Reception Committee welcomed the guests, saying that Moslems had a work of vital importance to get through. In regard to the recent Despatch of the Secretary of State, he regretted that Moslem interests had not been received the consideration due to them.

Mr. Ali Imam, President of the League delivered his inaugural address in which he set forth the political aims and aspirations of Moslems.... After sketching the new changes, and remarking that it was well that the power of the Executive should be maintained unimpaired and that popular representation could not be dreamed of for a very long since he said.

I regret to say that the Despatch of the Secretary of State has failed to recognise the interest of the great minority you represent in two most weighty particulars. One is that it under-estimates the claims of Mahommedans by given them the proportion of 1 to 3 to our Hindu countrymen, which may be, in accordance with the numerical strength of two communities, but is certainly not justified by the social, traditional, and religious consideration, attaching to Indian Mahommedans. The test of mere numbers is dangerous and misleading. As a community Mahommedans contribute largely to the defence of the Empire, and have also the weight of their pan-Islamic relations to enhance the value of their position in India... .

Gentlemen, the definite and clear pronouncement of the Viceroy and the above mentioned tendency of the Despatch, convinces me that the importance of the political position of Indian Moslems has not been brought home to the serious consideration of the Secretary of State. I feel persuaded that closer acquaintance with the internal problems of India's politics will put Lord Morley in possession of facts and circumstances that will amply justify the pronouncement the great Viceroy made in reply to our address at Simla.

In this connection I fear we have to admit that our more enterprising

Hindu countrymen have successfully secured hearing in England and their political missionaries have reached in quarters where our voices have only to reach to be appreciated. It is to this very silence on our part that I attribute the failure of the Despatch to recognise and protect our interests.

Source : The Englishman, 31 December 1908.

31

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS OF SYED ALI IMAM TO THE ALL-INDIA MOSLEM LEAGUE SECOND SESSION, AMRITSAR

30–31 December 1908

Gentlemen, I thank you heartily for the great honour you have conferred upon me by asking me to preside at your deliberations on the occasion of this the first Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League held after its constitution was passed last March. To occupy the position with which you have favoured me to-day, is, to my mind, a proud privilege and, however unworthily I may possess it, I wish to assure you that the present moment is the proudest in my life. The political conditions that affect the Mussulmans of India bristle with problems of much gravity; it is, therefore, greatly to be regretted that unforeseen circumstances have deprived this gathering of the presence amongst us of a leader of such exceptional ability as Syed Amir Ali, C. I. E. His vast learning, mature views and ardent love of Islam and Muslims entitle him to rank as one of the foremost Indian Mussulmans of the day, eminently fitted to give the right direction to the political energy of our community.

You will miss in your deliberations on the present occasion the masterly guidance of a savant, an erudite scholar and a profound thinker. Under the circumstances, I keenly feel the weight of the responsibility placed on my shoulders for having been called upon to preside in this assembly. Political deliberations require much clearness of vision, foresight, temperate and dispassionate language, exactness of expression, sagacity, judgement, a genuine regard for the view of the opponent and no less an appreciation of the points of his case. Overwhelmed with the conviction of my own shortcomings, I am buoyed up with the confidence that the assembly in which I have the honour to preside to-day represents the intense earnestness, the high aspirations, and the elevating ideals of a community that, for all its numerical inferiority, is rich in quality of race and traditions of political perception and administrative ability. I feel assured that on the task that you have set to

yourselves, the political development of your community, you will bring to bear in our proceedings the sobriety, the patience and the wisdom which are the forerunners of the success of any undertaking.

Politically speaking, the Mahommedans of India occupy a unique position. I believe it is without a parallel in the history of the world. Close upon a thousand years ago, the Arab Mahommedan scented the desert air of Sind and found its sand-mounds and date-groves reminding him of Hejaz, of Arabia Felix. Since then wave upon wave of Muslim conquest has rolled over the entire length and breadth of India. In serried ranks, Mussulman Royal Houses rose and fell, but Muslim domination of the country remained more or less an unbroken chain, till in comparatively more recent times supremacy hung in the balance between the Marhatta spear and the British bayonet. Islam, in its world-wide career of conquest and conversion, met on Indian soil with a resistance which had little of the admirable military prowess of the Hindus. What Hindu chivalry was powerless to protect, Hindu ethics, Hindu philosophy and Hindu social system had made impregnable. Centuries rolled by but the conqueror and the conquerred in point of nationality, character and creed suffered not from their political association. Characteristics of race and religion and political and social ideals of the two presented irreconcilabilities. Quranic teaching throws open wide the door of conversion with equal right and liberty, social and political, to the new comer. His entrance into the brotherhood of Islam is a passport to all that is the highest and the best in that community. Islam is expansive, has the capacity to hold all nations in its embrace. Hinduism inculcates a tenacious adherence to a faith that is not proselytizing, that has encased itself within the rigidity of the caste-system and that has no catholicity. To be a Hindu one has to be born one. Birth imposes no limitations on the Muslim. The methods of theological thought of the two communities are totally different. The Muslim's severely puritanical unitarian idea of the Godhead stands in violent contrast with the beautiful but crowded mythology of the Hindu. In the East, religion enters into the very life of the people. It permeates the fabric of society, supplies the spring of individual action in everyday life, and dominates habits of thought in a measure unknown to the West. The social relations of the Indian Muslim and the Hindu have not yet received the geniality of a common dinner-table nor the sacrament or legal sanction of matrimony. The two communities, from the truly social point of view, are as far apart to-day as they were a thousand years ago. Time has not worn out any of the angularities that characterized their social systems when they first came face to face. Similarly some of their political methods have been distinct. The two communities from the truly social point of view, are as far apart to-day as they were a thousand years ago. The two communities have different nations of sovereignty. The Mussulman sovereign presides in the council chamber, leads at prayer, and commands in the battlefield. He is at once the head of the State and the Church. The Hindu monarch considered

it a privilege, under religious obligation to kiss the Brahmin's toe. The Hindu Rajah has an overlord in the authority of the hierarchy. Papal bulls had not the same terror for the crowned heads of Christian Europe as the frown of the Brahmin for a Hindu chief.

It is clear, therefore, that, apart from ethnic diversity of character, the two communities have nothing in common in their traditional, religious, social and political conceptions. There must be something imperishable in the cherished beliefs of both. Each has so far passionately clung to its own. Indeed there is much in Hinduism that evokes admiration. It is indestructible. It is perfect and complete in itself. Its foundation is laid in the innermost recesses of the sentiments and emotions of its people. It is a magnificently organized system, each part in faultless co-ordination with the rest. Hide-bound, it has lived down the influence of ages of alien rule. On the other hand, the vitality and robustness of Islamic principles made it impossible for the conqueror to be absorbed in the civilization of the land where he had come to stay. The soul-stirring preaching that followed the descent of the Great Prophet from Mount Hera has given mankind the essence of a rational and living faith. The trumpet call of Mohammad to duty to righteousness, to Islam have left undying echoes. Under such conditions the fusion of the two, Hinduism and Islam, could not be predicated. The verdict of history is that, in holding India under subjection for centuries, the Mahommedan held only her body and not her soul. For political ends, for the happiness of the country as a whole and the formation of a flourishing commonwealth, the relation of the two communities was anomalous and out of joint. The keen-sighted statesmanship of the great Akbar saw this and aimed at unification by conciliation, compromise and concession in religious, social and political directions. A long and tolerant reign of about 50 years proved the failure of the experiment. Unification demands absorption and obliteration of the landmarks of differences and divergences. The imperial reformer at best achieved a friendly understanding with his Hindu subjects, which resulted more from the consciousness of a just liberal government than any acceptance of the old ethics of Islam or its religious, social and political principles. The innate difference of creed and character, of race and tradition and of social and political ideas remained ready to spring into active hostility as soon as a favourable apportunity presented itself. Aurangzeb saw, no less than his great-grandfather, the political necessity of unification. He adopted, however, the desperate and hazardous method of religious intolerance and forcible conversion. The experiment failed again. Prejudices and practices of both the communities, sanctified by the observance of ages, defied cohesion. Persuasion and persecution equally proved futile. With the weakening of administrative control, the Mussulman found himself isolated. New Hindu powers rose in rebellion round the tottering throne of the Moghul. The strife had all the character of a crusade, and the disruption was but the reflexion of the irreconcilability of Hinduistic with Islamic conceptions.

It was at this period when the country was torn and bleeding, when sectarian passions and prejudices had leapt up from their hidden lairs, and when Islam, whatever of it that was in India was on the brink of an inglorious annihilation, that an inscrutable Providence ordained the advent of a power that gave the country peace and religious toleration, that vanquished the forces of anarchy and disorder, and that introduced a form of government that paralysed the hand of fanaticism. The coming of the British into the country was the signal for Hinduism and Islam to retire, each within its own limits. It gave the land a strong and well ordered form of administration that respects the personal law and religious principles and prejudices of all communities so long as they do not interfere with the general peace of the country. It is idle to deny that, however fortuitously, one immediate manifestation of British rule in India was the complete immunity the Indian Mussulmans received from the not unnatural but fierce resentment of the Hindu. A new era dawned on the destinies of the vast continent of India, a morning full of promise and hope, of intellectual advancement and material prosperity. The impact of the Western methods of administration, the characteristically generous desire to govern in deference to popular views and the inauguration of a high souled policy of public instruction, have created in the last 50 years aspirations and political perceptions which the people of India had never felt before. A free press, and till very recently an irresponsible press, public speaking, and similarly till very recently an unrestrained public speaking, have engendered indefinite and vague ideas of home rule, self-government, autonomy and Swaraj among many other political conundrums that have brought about an unrest which has in the present day occupied the anxious thoughts of many friends of India, both among the subject without regard to the pathetic side of the present situation. It is the liberalism of the great British nation that has taught Indians, through the medium of English education, to admire democratic institutions, to hold the rights of the people sacred above all rights, and to claim for their voice first place in the government of the country. The mind of close upon three generations of the educated classes in the land has been fed on the ideas of John Stuart Mill, Milton, Burke, Sheridan and Shelley, has been filled with the great lessons obtainable from chapters of the constitutional history of England, and has been influenced by inexpressible considerations arising out of the American War of Independence, the relation of Great Britain with her colonies, and last, though not least, the grant of autonomy to the Boers after their subjugation at an enormous sacrifice of men and money. The bitterest critic of the educated Indian will not hold him to blame for his present state of mind.

It is the English who have carefully prepared the ground and sown the seed that has germinated into what some of them are now disposed to consider to be noxious weed. It will be a dwarfed imagination, however, that will condemn the educational policy of the large-hearted and liberal-minded Englishmen who laid its foundation in this country. Those who inaugurated it

aimed at raising the people to the level where co-operation and good understanding between the rulers and the ruled is possible. Under the circumstances, the desire of the educated Indian to take a prominent part in the administration of his country is neither unnatural nor unexpected. The gracious proclamation of Her Late Majesty Queen Victoria, our loved and revered Malaka Moazzama, issued in 1858, contributed in no small measure to give shape to Indian aspirations. Among other messages of hope and peace not the least luminous was that her subjects of 'whatever race or creed should be freely and impartially admitted to offices in her service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity duly to discharge.' Since the promulgation of this Proclamation the country has enjoyed the inestimable blessings of internal peace. Education has taken long strides, commercial enterprise has shown enormous activity, industrial, agricultural and economic resources have developed, sanitation has improved, free medical aid has been brought within the reach of all, and the administration of the Public Works Department has been a monumental success. Railways and canals, roads and bridges and postal and telegraphic facilities have annihilated distance and brought distant provinces of the country within intelligent touch of each other. High offices of State, both administrative and judicial, have been filled by Indians, Bengal has seen the highest Executive Office next to the Lieutenant-Governor and the highest Judicial Office next to no one held by Indians. A liberal Secretary of State has reserved two seats on his Council for Indians, and the selection of the Honourable Syed Husain Bilgrami, C.S.I., to represent our community in that august assembly is a recognition of his towering personality among the Mussulmans of India. It is a selection of which we are justly proud. There are expectations in the near future of the appointment of an Indian to the membership of the Executive Council of the Viceroy, and I have no doubt the country can furnish men of the necessary education, ability and integrity duly to discharge the duties of the Viceregal colleague. As long as there are men of the necessary accomplishment amongst us, our community need not despair of seeing its representative occupy the proposed place. Recent appointments of Indian Mussulmans of high judicial posts in different provinces of the country is indicative of the desire of the Government to co-operate with the Indian Mussulmans in the work of administration with as much willingness and cordiality as with other communities. Given the necessary qualifications of education, ability and integrity, the protection of the special interests of the Mahommedans demand their admission to high offices of State. Where the requisite efficiency is forthcoming, it is but the adjustment of political balance to admit Indians of all races and creeds to the public service. His Excellency the Viceroy very rightly emphasized the wisdom of this principle when in his speech in the Council on the occasion of the passing of the Sedition Bill he gave expression to these words : 'I repudiate once for all the insinuation that has sometimes reached me that the Government of India has for political reasons favoured the interests of one community

against those of another. It has been the pride of the British Raj to balance without prejudice the claims of nationalities, of religions and of castes. It will continue to do so.' It is clear therefore that, while developing the material resources of the country, the Government has not been regardless of its duty to invite and to admit the people of the country to share the responsibilities of administration. The grant of local self-government, the concession of the right of interpellation, the recognition of popular associations and corporations to send their representatives to the Legislative Chambers of the country, the tendency to encourage useful discussion in budget speeches, and the keen desire to take the natural leaders of the people into the confidence of Government before a measure is passed into law, are but emphatic expressions of appreciation of the popular element in the transaction of the affairs of State. With fostering care, for years the Government has from time to time introduced institutions and encouraged methods that have abundantly furnished opportunity for political training.

Above all, one not the least remarkable development of the results of British occupation of the country is that India has come to acquire a common language. English is now a common medium of exchange of ideas from one end of the country to the other. It has drawn the myriad races and communities of India closer together than even before. Material, intellectual and political activities have brought about conditions of which the educated Indian is the embodiment. Hindu or Mahommedan, Parsee or Christian, intellectually the educated Indians have drawn nourishment from one and the same feeding bottle, the great liberalizing influence of the great British race. With all the theological, social and ethnic differences between communities in India, it is futile to question the fact that the educated Indians of whatever race they may be, have acquired a common attitude of thought relating to the land of their birth. There seems to be unanimity in the sentiment of love for the mother country. The passion to serve her, to advance her material and moral prosperity and to ameliorate her general condition, has taken firm root in the breast of the educated Indians. We, the educated Mussulmans of India, have no less love for the land of our birth than the members of the other communities inhabiting the country. India is not only the land of our birth, we are tied to her by the sacred association of ages. We yield to none in veneration of and affection for our motherland. All our hopes and all our aspirations are wrapped up in the general advancement of our country, and advancement all along the line, giving protection and preferment to all her children alike without any invidious distinction. England may well be congratulated on the success of the result of her undertaking.

It was a proud moment when last June at the Indian Civil Service dinner in London, Lord Morley made reference to the awakening in India. Addressing his hosts, His Lordship said : 'It would be idle to deny that there is at this moment, and there has been for some little time past, and very likely there will be for some time to come, a living movement in the mind of those people

for whom you are responsible. A living movement and a movement for what? A movement for objects which we ourselves have all taught them to think desirable objects.' It has gratefully to be acknowledged that British rule has given the peoples of India a common platform where they can come together, and from where it is possible for them to proclaim a broad-based patriotism that will hold in loving solicitude the interests of all the races and creeds that inhabit our vast country.

From the point of view of race and creed, two communities only stand forth most prominently out of the large group that forms the Indian population. These two are the great Hindu community, embracing nearly four-fifths of the inhabitants of British India, and the no less important community, the Mussulmans of India, that make up between one-fifth and one-fourth of the entire population. True, the significance of the Indian Mussulmans in point of number, though over 62 millions, is not very large when compared with the number of their Hindu countrymen. But the uncivilized portions of the country classified as Hindu take away in no small measure from the strength of the Hindu community as a numerical majority and thereby accord the Mussulmans a larger proportion to the real Hindu Majority. The importance of the Mussulmans of India however, if not based in their comparative numerical strength, is incalculably great on grounds of political considerations, as was pointed out in the Address presented by the famous Mahommedan Deputation at Simla two years ago to His Excellency the Viceroy, Lord Minto. That Address, in urging the claims of the Mahommedan community, drew attention to 'the value of the contribution which they make to the defence of the Empire', as also to 'the position which they occupied in India a little more than a hundred yeary ago, and of which the traditions have naturally not faded from their minds', His Excellency's reply dealing with the position taken in the Address recognized its validity in these words : 'You justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service it has rendered to the Empire I am entirely in accord with you.' But, gentlemen, it is not necessary that the political importance of the Indian Mussulmans should be, as it has been, ratified by Viceregal utterances. Our Hindu countrymen have paid us the just compliment, time after time, to say that their great organization, the Indian National Congress, remains incomplete as a political agency without the Mussulmans freely participating in its activities. In the last 23 years, leaders of that assembly have been at great pains to draw the Mussulmans of India to their annual deliberations. Indeed, from about September when the sittings of the Congress are about to be held, the political importance of Mussulman co-operation is openly preached. Exhortations from the platform rend the air and publications from the press carry far and wide to Mussulmans the invitation to join. The reasons why the Mussulmans of India have not responded to the appeal of the Congress leaders, I will dwell upon later. I am at this stage

of my discourse concerned with impressing upon you the consideration that you are a great community, that in the political affairs of the country you hold a place of unique importance, and it is your duty to realize fully the responsibility attaching to the position you occupy. Indifference to the political developments of the country and disregard of the phase through which these developments are passing are not possible any more. Side by side with the political activities of the Indian National Congress, the educational activity of the Mussulmans has proceeded at no ordinary pace. It was stimulated, thanks to the efforts of the Mahommedan Association by the well-known Government Resolution of 1885, which secures state encouragement to education among the Mahommedans and their employment in the Public Service. Consecration of lifelong devotion to the cause by private individuals was not wanting. The genius of our Grand Old Man, the Late Sir Syed, the burning eloquence of his late coadjutor, our Mehdi, the untiring energy of our Mushtaq, the inspiring songs of Hali, the thoughtful writings of Nazir Ahmed, and the learned disquisitions of Shibly have done their work. They spurred on the Mahommedans to take to Western learning and their efforts have been crowned with success, and the inevitable result is that the younger generation of Indian Mussulmans is not in a frame of mind to eschew politics. It may be, it is not yet, in the words of Lord Morley, 'intoxicated with the ideas of freedom, of nationality and self-government,' but, I say, it has sipped the strong wine of the intellectual vintage of Mill and Burke. It was some consideration of this sort that prompted a significant statement in the Simla Deputation Address : 'Recent events have stirred up feelings, specially among the younger generation of Mahommedans, which might, in certâin circumstances and under certain contingencies, easily pass beyond the control of temperate counsel and sober guidance.' The Mahommedan community, I feel persuaded, is confronted with problems of great political import.

One of the questions that the community had before it was whether its political requirements in relation to Government and to its countrymen of other races and creeds called for a separate political organization. The answer to this has been the founding of the All-India Muslim League. It is nearly a decade since Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk Bahadur call an informal meeting of leading Mahommedans of India at the house of my esteemed friend Mr. Hamid Ali Khan of Lucknow. I was present in that meeting. After the necessary deliberations, the gathering broke up and all of us who had taken part in it felt the absolute necessity of a political organization of our own. Two years ago that necessity became an urgent call which terminated in the Simla Deputation. On the occasion of the Deputation, advantage was taken of such a representative gathering, and the 35 signatories to the Address formed a band for the political organization of their people. A few months later, under the hospitality of that generous nobleman, the noble Premier of East Bengal, the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca, the foundation was laid. Last year Karachi saw that prince of merchants, Sir Adamji

Peerbhoy, deliver the inaugural address. It was there that the constitution was framed, which an Extraordinary Sitting of the League passed last March at Aligarh; thereafter the acceptance of the presidential chair of League by His Highness the Aga Khan was universally acclaimed by Indian Mussulmans as the pledge of the stability of the organization. The presence of representative Mussulmans from all the different parts of India in our gathering to-day is an assurance that the community has realized its political responsibility and that it is answerable for stewardship to the younger generation both within itself and without. We identify ourselves with all that aims at the general advancement of the true interests of the country. We have a rooted conviction that the true interests of the country lie in the maintenance of cordial relations among the Indian communities, and that the true political ideal is the one that aims at peaceful progress of such a national character as subserves the protection and advancement of the interests of all denominations.

Gentlemen, I claim for the League responsibility for working out political amelioration not only for the Mussulmans but for all races that inhabit our beloved country, India. I assert that ours is not a mission narrowed down to self seeking and sectarian aggression. I repudiate the suggestion that the League is in opposition to other political organisations of the country and that it has given a blank cheque to Government. We reserve the right of frankly, fearlessly and boldly criticizing the measures of Government; we reserve the right to protest howsoever respectfully, against the continuance of certain of its methods; we reserve the right to refuse to believe in the soundness of a particular policy of it; and we also reserve the right of standing shoulder to shoulder with our brethren of other denominations when we find our country suffering under a real grievance. But at the same time we declare that in our relations with Government we will not permit malice to cross our path, warp our judgement and create disaffection.

Gentlemen, in these days of political tribulation and unrest, professions of loyalty stand on slippery ground. But this I will say that, apart from ethical aspects of loyalty to the British Crown, the best sense of the country recognizes the fact that the progress of India rests on the maintenance of order and internal peace, and that order and internal peace, in view of the conditions obtaining in our country at present and for a very long time to come, immeasureably long time to come, spell British occupation. British occupation not in the thin and diluted form in which Canada, Australia and South Africa stand in relation to England, but British occupation in the sense in which our country has enjoyed internal peace during the last 50 years. Believe me that as long as we have not learnt to overcome sectarian aggressiveness, to rise above prejudices based on diversity of races, religions and languages, and to alter the alarming conditions of violent intellectual disparity among the peoples of India, so long British occupation is the principal element in the progress of the country. The need of India is to recognize

that true patriotism lies in taking measure of the conditions existing in fact and devoting oneself to amelioration. Idealism may be enchanting but has little place in practical politics.

The idealistic *Swaraj*, as understood in the light of a Calcutta High Court ruling, is a fascinating picture, but their Lordships who delivered that judgement were not concerned with the political inadaptability of moral it teaches; they were concerned only with the question whether it teaches any thing unlawful. Now, no one can claim that to advocate the grant of *Swaraj* to India as understood by their Lordships is unlawful or treasonable, but I do think that there are strong and valid reasons to hold that it will be the biggest political blunder for the peoples of India to ask, and the British Parliament to grant, it in the near or even the measurably remote future. I admit it is difficult to detect treason if the self-government of the idealist is, as put by that eminent countryman of ours, Dr. Rash Behari Ghose, 'autonomy within the Empire and not absolute independence.' But, gentlemen, the entire population of India is not made up of lawyers nor is it concerned with legal subtleties. What disastrous consequences may not flow by the public acquiring notions of *Swaraj* without the capacity to understand the technicalities on which their Lordship's decision is based. *Swaraj* or self-government, autonomy or a self-governing member of the Empire, in other words, home rule under the aegis of the British Crown in India, is possible only when racial, religious, social and intellectual disparities are removed, and a fusion has levelled down characteristics of separate denominations to a plane where the pulsations of a common national life are the most prominent features.

I cannot say what you think, but when I find the most advanced province of India put forward the sectarian cry of '*Bande Mataram*' as the national cry, and the sectarian *Rakhibandhan* as a national observance, my heart is filled with despair and disappointment; and the suspicion that, under the cloak of nationalism, Hindu nationalism as preached in India becomes a conviction. Has the experiment tried by Akbar and Aurangzeb failed again ? Has 50 years of the peaceful spread of English education given the country only a revival of denominationalism ? Gentlemen, do not misunderstand me. I believe that the establishment of conferences, associations and corporate bodies in different communities on denominational lines are necessary to give expression to denominational views, so that the builders of a truly national life in the country may have before them the crystallised needs and aspirations of all sects. In this connection, every lover of India will welcome such institutions as the Kayestha Conference, the Bhuinhar Conference, the Rajput Conference, Mahommedan anjumans and conferences, the associations of the Domiciled Community, and all such denominational institutions. Such activities help to bring into focus the thoughts of all sections of the population of India. Regard for the feelings and sentiments, needs and requirements of all is the key-note to true Indian nationalisation. It is far more imperative

where the susceptibilities of the two great Communities, Hindus and Mussulmans, are involved. Unreconciled, one will be as great a drag on the wheel of national progress as the other. I ask the architects of Indian nationalism, both in Calcutta and Poona, do they expect the Mussulmans of India to accept '*Bande-Mataram*' and the Shivaji Celebration ? The Mahommedans may be weak in anything you please, but they are not weak cherishing the traditions of their glorious past. I pray the Congress leaders to put before the country such a programme of political advancement as does not demand the sacrifice of the feelings of the Hindu or the Mahommedan, the Parsee or the Christian.

The preparation for self-government does not consist in merely insisting on it year after year in language that fires the imagination of the educated classes of the country into un-controllable and fatal excesses, as is too painfully manifested in what is happening in Bengal. It does not consist in launching forth on the troubled waters of Indian politics the frail bark of *Swaraj* without care of its seaworthiness. Does *Swaraj* mean transfer of control, from the British to the peoples of India, of all internal affairs of the country, legislation, finance, administration of civil and criminal justice, police, state education, military service ? I suppose this is what is contemplated by Article I of the Allahabad Convention Committee. That Article sums up the object of the Indian National Congress to be 'the attainment by the people of India of a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing Members of the British Empire.' As a mere ideal without any reference to the conditions prevailing in India it is unexceptionable. Utopia is not unimaginable. But that it should furnish a basis in practical politics to divide off into moderates and extremists is incomprehensible. Have politicians of these two cults considered the futility of a schism that is engaged in laying down irreconcilable lines of policy for conditions that are not likely to be possible even in any measurably remote future ? Is it wise to weaken the solidarity of political unity ? Have we Indians put our own house in order ? Have the Hindus and Mussulmans sunk their many differences ? What has kept the Mahommedans as a people away from the Indian National Congress ? It was, I say, this very demand for the transfer of legislative and administrative control from the rulers to the ruled: in other words, that the ruling authority should vest in the party that commands a majority of votes in the Council Chambers of the Indian Autonomy. It did not require much imagination to see that such a majority would be the Hindu majority. What did the suggested change of masters signify ? Twenty-one years ago Sir Syed answered the question in his memorable Lucknow speech, and that answer has been for over two decades the rule of conduct for the Mahommedans of India in relation to the Congress. The All-India Muslim League has to answer that very question again. Should the Mahommedans of India accept the views of what was the Indian National Congress before the fateful and abortive Surat Sitting ? It seems to me

that there are many questions of practical politics where the interests of the two communities are identical, and that in so far as these questions go, there is no earthly reason why the League should not hold out its hand in loving and patriotic grasp to the Congress.

The separation of the judiciary from the executive, the repeal of degrading Colonial Ordinances, the extension of primary education, the adoption of measures of sanitation, the admission of Indians of all races in larger numbers into the higher branches of the public service, discontinuance of official interference in matters of local self-government, reasonable reduction of military expenditure without endangering efficiency, recognition of the legitimate and patriotic desire of the warlike races of India to render military service as volunteers, the grant of commissions in the army to Indians, equitable adjustment of Home Charges, limitation of revenue on land belonging to the State, establishment and development of village unions for the disposal of petty civil and criminal cases, encouragement and protection of indigenous arts and industries, the eradication of insolence, on one hand, and feeling of inferiority and mortification on the other, between the rulers and the ruled, are some of the many grave questions of practical politics in India that equally affect all classes of our countrymen. I deny the accusation that the Mahommedans of India have not either the capacity to understand the value of co-operation for the accomplishment of reforms of the courage to face official disapprobation. Gentlemen, Mahommedan political foresight and Mahommedan courage do not require any advocacy. The world has seen enough of both to judge that they are wanting in neither. Why is it then that we have held aloof from the Indian National Congress ? Not because we do not want co-operation, not because we do not feel the urgency and wisdom of the reforms mentioned above and others of their kind, and not because we suffer from any nervous or morbid fear of the rulers, but because the Indian National Congress does not only seek reforms such as are described above. It wants far more. To ask our rulers for specific measures of reform is to admit and recognize the necessity of their control, but to ask them to hand over that control is to ask them, however politely, to take to their ships and return from India. To ask for the latter is to ask for a change of government, and to press for the former would be, as put in Article I of the Allahabad Convention, 'a steady reform of the existing system of administration.' It is obvious that the existing system of administration is not 'a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the Self-Governing Members of the British Empire'. That article puts the latter as the objects of the Congress and the reform of the former as the method of attainment.

It seems to me therefore that to attain the object, the method suggested would not be 'reform', however steady, of the 'existing system', but its extinction. The article does not seem to seek reform but revolution, though bloodless. Surely the Indian public has a right to have more light thrown on the meaning of that article. A shrewd suspicion may read between the

lines and find the genesis of the inconsistency in the desire to pull together men of different shades of political views, loyalists, ultra moderates, moderates and those verging on extremism. The desire is laudable, but the *modus operandi* questionable. It is possible to hide in dialectic obscurity the differences of basic principles for a time, but it will be blind folly to hope they will remain there. I wonder how those who have gone to Madras interpret 'steady reform of the existing system of administration'. If it really means extinction, the languages of the Convention may serve to capture the unwary but not to captivate him. It resolves itself into the ideal put forward by the Indian National Congress year after year. The moderate wants autonomy or representative government under the aegis of the British Crown, and the extremist wants the same but without the fiction of the aegis. They both desire the extinction and not the reform of the present system of administration. Canada and Australia are tied to England by sentiments of race, character and creed, and their continuance as such under the aegis of the British Crown, as long as they are not treated with unpolitic interference, has an intelligent basis. The grant of autonomy to the Boers is of too recent a date to prognosticate that the aegis will be respected. In the case of America the aegis proved too brittle to servive the effects of the Boston Port Bill. In the light of the differences of social, moral and religious standards of England and India, and the diversity of race, character and creed between the ruler and the ruled, one may be pardoned for thinking that of the two ideals, however impracticable both, the one of the extremist, though steeped in treason, is not disingenuous. It definitely sets before the country the honest version that if self-government is attained by India, the British may not flatter themselves with the belief that they will have even the slender thread of the aegis to connect them with this country. The moderate hopes to hasten self-government by giving assurances of profound loyalty to the aegis, and with such assurances asks for autonomy. But gentlemen, is this all that is needed for India ? The ideal of the one or of the other ? Is the present need of India contemplation of ideals ? Has the good sense of the country run away with the notion that self-government is to be built in the land from the apex and not the base.

I crave your indulgence to quote a speech that I delivered when I had the honour to preside at the first session of the Bihar Provincial Conference. 'To my mind the greater problem is now to equip ourselves for receiving and assimilating the amenities and advantages of self-government, than an insistence on the right to enjoy a privilege which, once we have reached the requisite efficiency, can no more be denied than the truth that water finds its own level. I consider that in the development of national life in India there is far less danger from without than from within.' Have the apostles of Indian autonomy given us up to this time, any indication how their great ideal will maintain internal peace, what will be its relation to the ruling chiefs, what will be the features of its military administration, how will it

adjust the difference of standards of morality in its scheme of national education, how will it conduct itself in the devious and difficult paths of foreign policy, what guarantee will it give to capitalists of other countries who have their millions vested in India, what protection will it accord to the domiciled European, how will it get over the dangers of intellectual disparity between races and sexes in India, and how will it reconcile religious, social and racial antipathies ? Are religion, society and politics watertight compartments ? Can you separate politics from the other two ? If a religious procession, the slaughter of a particular animal, the moral of Bunkim's plot in *Anand Math* the preachings of fanatics in East Bengal or any other part of India, and numerous other subjects connected with religion, influence the mind, it is insanity to dissociate Indian politics from them. Surely gentlemen, the mere elevation of an ideal is no title to its serious acceptance. True statesmanship is to work for the highest public good realizable. Before self-government, our ideal should be 'United India'—united in a patriotism that leaves distant and visionary ideals to moulder in the vagueness and impracticability of their conception, and that addresses itself to working on non-controversial lines. How true are the words of the president of the unfortunate Surat Sitting of the Congress in his undelivered speech He said : 'Hasty maxims drawn from the history of other nations and other times are extremely dangerous, as the conditions are never the same, and action which produces certain results in one country at one time may lead to a directly opposite result in another country and at another time.' Has not this ideal of self-government, however, elevated, caused impatience on account of its impracticability, and has not the impatience carried the idealist off his feet, and has not this loss of equipoise created extremism, and has not extremism, given birth to anarchism, bombs, secret societies and assassination, and is not all this the greatest menace to the peaceful progress of the country ?

Gentlemen, does the contemplation of an almost impossible ideal compensate for all the repressive measures that have been passed in the last two years ? Resurrection of Regulation 3 of 1818, Ordinance of May 1907, the Seditious Meetings Act, the Newspaper (incitement to offences) Act, and the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act are the bitter fruits of the misspent labour of the idealist in the last two decades. These Acts may be a reproach to the Statute Book, but who is responsible for the reproach? The responsibility lies with those who, infatuated with the seductions of an idealistic but impracticable autonomy, have caused widespread intellectual distemper among the educated Indians, a distemper utterly regardless of surroundings, of expediency and of the best interests of the country. The gospel of representative government in India has been preached with reckless carelessness, and the energy of the educated intellect of the country has been employed for the creation of longings the fulfilment of which within any measurable distance of time is impossible. The result is a sullen, dis-

appointed, demoralized and morbid disposition in the best portion of the national asset of the country—the educated Indians.

Is this not sufficiently deplorable a state of affairs to serve as a warning to us, Mussulmans ? Has not the League a right to beseech the Congress leaders not to prolong the agony any more, imperil the safety of the country any further and jeopardize peaceful progress by a profitless devotion to a chimera ? Let the Indian National Congress shake itself free from the baneful blandishments of 'Self Governing members of the British Empire'; and let it announce that in our practical politics, loyalty to the British administration, of the country is loyalty to India, and that the reform of the 'existing system' is possible only with the maintenance of British control. Gentlemen, I am not putting this supplication forward in any spirit of cavil, but solely with a view to bringing about an *entente cordiale* between the Indian National Congress and the great community that you represent and also with a view that in the great work of the regeneration of India, the firm but guiding hand of our rulers may be in comradeship with our own. As long as the leaders of the Indian National Congress will not give us a workable policy like the one indicated above, so long the All India Muslim League has a sacred duty to perform. That duty is to save the community it represents, and specially the youth of that community, from the political error of joining an organization that in the main, as put by Lord Morley, cries for the moon.

There is another matter not of principle but of procedure that influences the question of the participation of the Mussulmans in the deliberations of the Congress. The Allahabad Convention with the best of motives has adopted the conciliatory measure contained in its Article XXVI. That article lays down the procedure that in the Subject Committee or in the Congress no subject shall be introduced to which the Hindu or Mahommedan delegates may object as a body by a majority of three-fourths of their number. I have read much in papers, as also in a contribution to the *Hindustan Review* by Mr. Abbas Tyabji, of the soundness of the safeguard this Article provides for the protection of minorities. It is with the greatest deference to the framers of that Article and its admirers that I venture to point out that this safeguard does not count for much as long as the number of delegates to the Congress is not fixed, and as long as the minorities do not have their own denominational electoral colleges. For it is quite obvious that when an unlimited number of delegates are permitted to attend the Congress, the few simple souls of our community who may join the Congress with the genuine desire of serving Indian Mussulmans in that body may find themselves swamped by their own co-religionists, no doubt but mandatories of non-Muslim electorates. For the principle of the protection of minorities, it is necessary that a minority should feel and enjoy absolute security in its own solidarity, which is impossible without a denominational basis. I believe this was recognized in the scheme of the reform of councils, and therefore a separate electorate for the Mussulmans was considered necessary. Once the

Congress Convention has recognized the wisdom of the unqualified protection of the minorities, I have no doubt it will see the necessity of carrying Article XXVI to its logical conclusion.

It seems to me therefore, gentlemen, that should the Indian National Congress in the two particulars mentioned above, the one of the policy underlying the abandonment of an unrealizable ideal and the other procedure affecting the protection of minorities, be pleased to reconsider its position, there is every hope that the aspiration of the All-India Muslim League—United India—may be realized in the near future. It is then alone that Mahommedans can work with Hindus on non-controversial lines. I may take the liberty of mentioning that we have made a beginning in this direction in Bihar, and that the Bihar Provincial Conference held last April at Patna brought Hindus and Mahommedans together because it resolved to work on a non-controversial and practical basis. Gentlemen, should my feeble voice ever reach the ears of such stalwart leaders of the Indian National Congress as Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Mr. Gokhale and Dr. Rash Behari Ghose, I pray them to believe in the earnestness of my appeal. The creed of the All India Muslim League is cooperation with the rulers, cooperation with our non-Muslim countrymen and solidarity amongst ourselves. This is our idea of United India.

Gentlemen, I fear I have already trespassed too long on your patience, but I cannot close my address without an appeal to all my Mussulman brethren of India, of whatever persuasion they may be, that the one paramount duty they owe to their king, country and themselves is the maintenance of a strong and powerful solidarity within their own community. We must not forget that division amongst ourselves means sacrifice and surrender of our political position. Gentlemen, if you desire your voice to be heard in the land, you must strive for and maintain unity amongst yourselves. The Government and your non-Muslim countrymen have equal need of your services. It is your duty to support and uphold the Government in the measures it has adopted to stamp out lawlessness, sedition and anarchism. It is your duty equally to cooperate with your non-Muslim countrymen in praying Government to inaugurate a policy of steady reform and courageous conciliation consistent with the dignity and integrity of British control. Gentlemen, the country is passing through the throes of a political convulsion. Of all times, this is the one when, in serving the best interests of the country, you should stand together and make your presence felt in the proper and happy adjustment of the relations between the rulers and the ruled. Can you do so without unity amongst yourselves ? Without and absolute political solidarity your position is full of peril, and I implore you to unite to exist.

Gentlemen, the last Despatch of Lord Morley to His Excellency the Viceroy on the scheme of the Reform of Councils, seems to overlook the principle that representation to minorities must have its origin in a denomi-

national basis from the very start to finish, from the first voting unit to the elected representative. Without this the Mussulmans cannot hope to secure the true protection which their interests demand. Hasty expression to my views on this Despatch, received last week, I hesitate to give; but the principle involved is of vital consequences to our community, and a united expression of our views alone can save us from the perils of imperfection contained in the Despatch. Gentlemen, I again call upon you to unite. It is a solemn and sacred duty you owe to yourself and to your posterity.

SECOND SITTING

The second sitting lasted from 2-30 p.m. to 6-00 p.m., and was devoted to the consideration of the Reform Scheme of the Government of India and the recent Despatch of the Secretary of State. The following three Resolutions were moved from the Chair :

RESOLUTION I

That the All-India Muslim League begs to express its grateful thanks to the Right Honourable the Lord Morley, the Secretary of State for India, and His Excellency Lord Minto, the Viceroy, for the broad and general policy foreshadowed in the Despatch dealing with the Reform Scheme.

RESOLUTION II

That the All-India Muslim League regrets that the Secretary of State for India has not explicitly confirmed in his Despatch on the Scheme of Reforms of Councils the just pronouncement of His Excellency the Viceroy, in reply to the address presented by a Deputation of Mussulmans in October 1906, that in consideration of the value of contributions which the Mussulmans make to the defence of the Empire and in view of the position which they occupied in India until recently, His Excellency was in entire accord with the members of the Deputation, who, in His Excellency's opinion, justly claimed that the position of the Mussulmans should be estimated not merely by their numerical strength but in respect to the political importance of their community and the services it has rendered to the Empire, and this League trusts that important pronouncement will specially be confirmed by the Secretary of State and given practical recognition in fixing the proportion of seats on the Councils to be filled in by purely Mahommedan electorates.

RESOLUTION III

That whereas the language of paragraph 12 of the Despatch of the Secretary of State dealing with the Scheme of Reform of Councils is such as

has possibly engendered in the mind of some of the loyal Indian Mahommedans the incorrect impression that the paragraph in question suggests the grant of separate and denominational representation to the Mahommedans of India; and whereas the All-India Muslim League regards such impression to be solely due to an optimism that proceeds from the unqualified trust the Indian Mahommedans have traditionally reposed in the justice and impartiality of the British Government, the All-India Muslim League deems it to be its duty to deplore the vagueness of the language of that paragraph, and most regretfully construes it to mean that the scheme of representation of the minorities contained in the said paragraph does not and cannot secure the protection which is intended to be given to such communities, as the creation of non-denominational electorates whether original or intermediary, precludes the possibility of the successful election of the real representatives of minorities and that mere reservation of a certain number of seats on Imperial and Provincial Councils in favour of such communities without any system of denominational representation from the first voting units to the representatives in the Council Chambers will end in the return of such members of minorities as are only mandatories of majorities and that under the circumstances the All-India Muslim League views the suggestion in paragraph 12 of the said despatch with great alarm, and have grave apprehensions that in their present form they are sure to create dire disappointment in the Mahommedan community, and that unless materially altered to suit their requirements, the essentials of which are representation on a purely denominational basis, they will mark the first breakdown of that implicit faith which Mussulmans have so long placed in the care and solicitude of Government whose just pride and profession have been to hold the scales even.

In moving the above Resolutions, Syed Ali Imam said :

Since my address presented to you this morning went to press, I have had an opportunity to carefully consider some of the important aspects of the Reform foreshadowed in the famous Despatch of the Secretary of State for India, and I am glad to say that I am now in a position to place before you my views with some degree of confidence. I think, with some important reservations, a general treatment of the Reform Scheme will result in laying bare before us the two important features that seem to underlie its conception; one, and the more prominent of the two, is a jealous and vigilant insistance on the unimpaired integrity and maintenance of the Legislative and Executive control of the existing system of administration, and the other is a generous recognition of the necessity to hear what the people may have to say affecting the interests of their country. In both these particulars, Lord Morley, has, I venture to submit, given proof of statesmanship of the high order which has been long associated with his name. He has realized the danger of compromising imperial supremacy by withholding concessions that might, in the present politically undeveloped condition of the peoples of India, lead to serious conflict between races, creeds and degrees of intellectual advancement.

He has also taken a correct measure of the political expediency of securing deliberative co-operation of the representatives of the people in the Council Chambers of the State.

The non-official majority in the Provincial Council and the permanently substantial official majority in the Imperial Council, taken with the frank admission with regard to the very limited scope of the Provincial Councils and unlimited concurrent power of the Imperial Council to legislate, leave no doubt in our mind that the non-official majority has been designed to be effective only as a deliberative agency and not legislative. The value of the proposals of the non-official majority has been carefully appraised as 're-commendations to Government, having only such force and effect as Government after consideration shall deem due to them'. No ambiguity has been allowed to mar the retention by local governments of 'the ultimate control over the financial policy of their provinces', and the discussion of the provincial budgets, however lengthy and discursive, seem to suffer from limitations that do not confer upon them anything higher than a deliberative dignity. Similarly, the extention of the range and right of interpellation has been safeguarded by subjecting it to 'such restrictions as may be found requisite in practice, and to the existing general powers of the President'. The proposal to create executive councils from time to time is accompanied with the proviso that a constitutional change of this kind will not be permitted at the risk of impairing 'the prompt exercise of executive control'. The sum and substance of such precautions seems to justify the conclusion that the Secretary of State is not prepared to inaugurate a system of government in which popular control, whether legislative or executive, is an element.

Gentlemen, it is obvious that this attitude of the Secretary of State is one that is not likely to commend itself to the extremists, nor do I think the moderates, after the jubilation over the dazzling glamour of a 'non-official majority' is over, will admit it to be what they had bargained for. The suggested reforms, in my humble judgement, are far short of the ideals of the extremists and the moderates. They do not give the people any share what so-ever in the government of the country, except what is advisory, scrupulously centring in the existing system of administration all legislative and executive control. Gentlemen, I am drawing your attention to the care that has been spent on this aspect of the scheme, not with any desire to discount the wisdom and the statesmanship of the new measures, but to emphasize in the scheme to lie in the absolute maintenance of British control. This is a principle which for a long time to come has to be kept in view for the inauguration of any measures of reform in our country. To my mind, without such security, the most perfect system of representative government would be unworkable and injudicious in a country that suffers from the unhappy internal conditions that prevail in India. I therefore, think any feeling of disappointment at the complete withholding of administrative control from the people should not be permitted to mar the happy occasion of thanking and congratulating the

Secretary of State and His Excellency Lord Minto for the grant to the peoples of India of the right to have their voice heard, if not necessarily acted upon in the administration of the country. I trust that the All-India Muslim League will heartily and unanimously thank and congratulate the liberal minister and the large-hearted Viceroy who intend to provide for our country the means of bringing the rulers and the ruled near enough to understand and appreciate the views of each other.

But when I ask the League to thank, and cordially thank them, for the recognition of the principle, I do not for a moment ask it to accept the machinery that the Despatch of the Secretary of State seems to favour for the representation of the minorities. No, and emphatically not so. I regret to say that the Despatch has failed to recognise the interests of the great minority you represent in two most weighty particulars. One is that it underestimates the claims of the Mahommedans by giving them a proportion of 1 to 3 to our Hindu countrymen, which may be in accordance with the numerical strength of the two communities, but is certainly not justified by the social, traditional, and religious considerations attaching to the Indian Mahommedans. The test of mere numbers is dangerous and misleading. As a community, the Mahommedans contribute largely to the defence of the Empire and have also the weight of their Pan-Islamic relations to enhance the value of their position in India. I should have thought that the memorable pronouncement of His Excellency the Viceroy in reply to our Simla Deputation address, 'You justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength but in respect to the political importance of your community, and services it has rendered to the Empire,' had once for all given imperial recognition to our claim. I do not know how you feel, but when I contemplate the tendency of Lord Morley's Despatch to rely on numerical strength to understand the significance of our community in India, I look upon such a tendency as not only in the highest degree prejudicial to ourselves, but also as exceedingly impolitic and flagrantly unfair to the Viceregal utterances of a statesman of the level-headedness, care and circumspection of Lord Minto. The definite and clear pronouncement of the Viceroy and the above-mentioned tendency of the Despatch, convince me that the importance of the political position of Indian Mussulmans has not been brought home to the serious consideration of the Secretary of State. I feel persuaded that a closer acquaintance with the internal problems of Indian politics will put Lord Morley in possession of facts and circumstances that will amply justify the pronouncement this great Viceroy made in reply to our address at Simla.

In this connection, I fear we have to admit that our more enterprising Hindu countrymen have successfully secured a hearing in England, and their political missionaries have preached in quarters where our voice has only to reach to be appreciated. It is to this very silence on our part that I attribute the failure of the Despatch to recognize and protect our interests in the other particular. I refer to the suggestions in the Despatch that relate to the

representation of the minorities in the Councils. This subject has been principally dealt with in paragraphs 9, 11, 12, and 13 of the Despatch. Paragraph 9 enunciates the just principle that 'No system of representation should be satisfactory if it did not provide for the presence in the Councils of sufficient representatives of communities so important as are the Mahommedans and the landowners.' In this paragraph Lord Morley, has, I think, advisedly used the expression 'representatives of communities' as distinguished from 'members of communities'. The distinction lies in the fact that a member of a community is not necessarily a representative of that community. For a representative it is essential that he should enjoy the confidence of the community he represents and not only be a member of it. In the same paragraph, His Lordship discovers difficulties in the plan of the Viceroy to secure class representation, and distrusts the method of nomination to supply the efficiencies of election. In paragraph 11, His Lordship is, on the one hand, solicitous of maintaining the right of Mahommedans 'to vote in the territorial electorates of which rural and municipal boards will afford the basis', and on the other hand, regards the exercise of such a right, in the event of also creating denominational electorates, as giving us a double vote that may be resented by other classes of the population. It might by urged before His Lordship that if the full due of the Mahommedans can be secured in the Councils by means of separate and denominational electorates of which the Mahommedan section of the rural and municipal boards may form a part, the Mahommedans will not care to court the resentment of their non-Muslim countrymen to vote again in the said boards. It has to be remembered that the Viceroy, in giving us the double vote, threw open to purely Mahommedan electorates, only a portion of the seats to which we are entitled both on political and numerical grounds; as such the double vote is only a legitimate compensation, and ought not to be the basis of any grievance to our non-Muslim countrymen. Paragraph 12 provides the machinery which, His Lordship thinks, will be superior to the one proposed by the Viceroy for the purposes of securing denominational representations; and Paragraph 13 sums up that superiority in claiming for Lord Morley's machinery merit on the following grounds :

1. Minorities would be protected against exclusion by majorities.

2. All large and important sections of the population would have the opportunity of returning members in proportion to their ratio to the total population.

3. Popular election, instead of requiring Government to supply defficiencies by the dubious method of nomination.

Gentlemen, the dubious method of nomination, would naturally not find favour in comparison with the popular election in the eyes of such a liberal statesman as the Secretary of State; and in the abstract, without regard to the difficulties of the conditions prevailing in our country, it has to be admitted that his choice is not one that was not expected from a statesman of Lord

Morley's democratic conviction. But with due deference to abstract principles, I venture to submit that His Lordship, in the desire to brush aside 'the dubious method', has suggested a machinery in paragraph 12 which, to my mind, has swept away the protection which is admitted to be the first essential of the efficiency of the Scheme, and that is the protection of the minorities. The paragraph in question looks upon the mere reservation of seats in the Councils and in the intermediary agency, the electoral college, as a sufficient protection to save minorities from exclusion by majorities and to secure for the minorities, the ratio of 'members in proportion to their ratio to the total population.' Paragraph 12 of the Despatch as I understand it, I regret to have to say, utterly, fails in securing for us either of the two measures of protection which are claimed as its principle features. More reservation of a certain number of seats in the electoral college mentioned in the paragraph without carrying down the denominational element to the very base of the entire structure, the first voting unit, as also without carrying the same principle up to the top, the Council Chamber, will, I am sure, prove disastrous to our community, as it will leave the minorities bound hand and foot at the mercy of the majorities. Gentlemen, it will be a system that will be eminently successful in returning to the Council mandatories of the majorities who are 'members' of our community, no doubt, but certainly not 'representatives' of our people. It will be a system that foretells the political annihilation of our communal life. Whereas it intends to protect and preserve in its practical working, it will end in damage and destruction. Here is illustrated the peril of not relying on the advice and counsel of the man on the spot. Had Lord Morley given the suggestions of the Viceroy the considerations to which they are entitled, his Lordship, I put it most deferentially and respectfully, would not have fallen into an error that in the present condition of our country will be looked upon as a political blunder the consequences of which I fear to contemplate. I think in this hour of our peril it is our bounden duty to support and uphold the suggestions of His Excellency the Viceroy who had undoubtedly taken the correct view of the problem of class representation.

Gentlemen, I ask you to voice forth our support to the Viceroy's suggestions, and our humble but emphatic dissent from the Secretary of State's view on this question and want of acquaintance with our true political position. I pray you to unanimously pass the resolution which I have the honour to put from the Chair.

The above resolutions were seconded by Mian Mohammad Shafi, who observed :

I rise to-day not to address a passionate appeal to your sentiments and feelings, but to ask you to go with me through the broad features of the Scheme of Reform embodied in Lord Morley's Despatch and, in view of the vital interests involved, to consider it critically and soberly in order to form a correct judgement as to the effect which this scheme will have upon the future welfare of the Indian Mussulmans. The President has placed before you for

discussion three resolutions, the first of which offers the grateful thanks of the community to Lord Morley and Lord Minto generally for the proposed scheme of Indian Reforms, apart from its particular bearing on the communal interests of the Mahommedan community, and the remaining two briefly and succinctly set out the opinions generally held by the Mahommedan community, as regards the effects which this Scheme will have upon their own interest, and embody certain demands which they regard as absolutely essential, alike to their own future welfare as well as to the welfare of the country as a whole.

Gentlemen, I take it that it is the foremost principle of Indian Politics that while the 70 millions of His Majesty's Mussulman subjects in India have interests in common with the rest of the population in this country, they form a distinct community having peculiar interests of their own, as vital as the general interests and essential to their very existence in India. This principle was clearly enunciated in the address presented to His Excellency the Viceroy by the All-India Mahommedan Deputation on 1 October 1906, and was accepted by Lord Minto as perfectly sound and fully justified by the existing political conditions, and has now been finally confirmed by Lord Morley in paragraphs 8 and 9 of his Despatch. This being so, it is absolutely clear that no scheme of Indian reform can be considered either complete or based upon a correct conception of the peculiar conditions which the British Government has to face in this country and, at all events acceptable to the Indian Mussulmans, which does not adequately safeguard their interests and does not provide for their representation, not apparent but real, on the Legislative Councils and municipal and district boards. It is, therefore, absolutely clear that before any scheme of reform can be considered as entitled to our grateful thanks, it must satisfy this essential test. Of what can any gift conferred by the Government be to us in which we have not that share to which we are justly entitled ? How can I be possibly expected to offer my thanks for such a distribution of good things of this life which enable my neighbour to live in comfort and luxury, but leaves me in starvation ? The Mussulmans form an integral and exceedingly important part of the Indian people and no scheme of reform can be possibly considered beneficial to the people which does not safeguard Mahommedan interests. I gladly recognize that the scheme formulated by His Excellency the Governor-General in Council, after due consideration of local circumstances and based upon local knowledge of the political conditions prevailing in this country, provided for better representation, on proper lines, of all important interests on the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils, though we asked for more. I therefore freely give my support to that portion of the resolution which offers the grateful thanks of this League to Lord Minto. I am further in entire agreement with the President in thinking that it is our duty to express our gratitude to Lord Morley for his recognition of the right of our community to separate representation in the Council Chamber of the Indian Empire. But as regards the Scheme of Reform as at present embodied in Lord Morley's Despatch, while, in deference to the fact

that the resolution offering the thanks of this League has been moved from the Chair, I agree to its being passed as it stands, I refuse to accept the position that we are bound to express our gratitude to the Secretary of State for what is said to be the Scheme of General Reform, even if, as it stands, it is calculated to materially injure our interests and to fill our minds with dire disappointment. With the other two resolutions I am entirely in accord and do not think it necessary to add anything to what the President has already said.

The President having invited a free discussion of the resolutions, a large number of the members of the League spoke on the subject. The discussion strongly brought out the same disappointment with which Lord Morley's Despatch had filled Indian Mahommedans and served to clearly emphasize the complete unanimity of Muslim attitudes towards the Scheme as modified by the Secretary of State.

Sahibzada Aftab Ahmed Khan explained that considering that the present movement was a turning point in the history of India and the proposed reforms promised to open a new era in the political life of the country, he agreed with the President in thanking the Secretary of State for the broad and general lines of the reforms, but protested strongly against the scheme as a whole. It was clear that if the Indian Mussulmans were a distinct community and had to safeguard distinct interests, they should be placed in a position to safeguard their interests properly. The proportion of seats allotted to them should be placed in a position to safeguard their interests properly. The proportion of seats allotted to them should be real and commensurate with their importance.

Maulvi Rafiuddin Ahmed pointed out that as a result of the concession made in 1882, the operations of local self-government had passed into the hands of the majority and though the Mussulmans had been ever since protesting against such a condition of things, the provincial governments were now about to be placed in the same unfriendly hands. The unwisdom of granting local self-government to the people of India without a guarantee of protecting Muslim interests was unquestioned. The speaker also reminded the audience that in their opinion on the reform scheme they had asked for nine Mussulman members being appointed to the Imperial Council by election; but the Secretary of State wished to reduce the number still further and limit their maximum to five; and it was most remarkable that the Mahommedans of Bombay were to share a seat with the Madras Presidency, though Sind was an entirely Muslim Province. The Simla Deputation had stated before the Viceroy that the younger generation of Indian Mussulmans were not satisfied with this situation; and if His Excellency Lord Minto's reply had not been what it was, many of them in Bombay would have gone over to the Congress camp. But the Viceroy's generous reply saved the situation, which they looked upon as the Petition of Rights, embodying as it did a definite promise on the part of the King Emperor's representative that the Mahommedans would be admitted to the councils and committees as a

distinct community.

Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhry also spoke in favour of the resolutions. He observed :

The resolutions which we have heard from the Chair just now need our serious attention. The new reform schemes promulgated by Lord Minto and revised by Lord Morley are indeed of a very liberal nature and ought to be welcomed by all Indians as giving greater scope for a larger measures of self-government than has hitherto been initiated. The only class that will be largely benefited is the Hindu community, who have made rapid strides in educational matters. It is when the Scheme is considered in the point of view of the Mahommedan interest that we are awfully disappointed, and our condition, instead of improving will have a tendency to retrograde progress. While the race antipathy exists, as it does, the backward condition of the Mahommedan in point of education is a serious matter to be confronted. Where are the qualified candidates to recruit members from for the electoral colleges as the provisos of the Scheme demand. The electoral colleges proposed by Lord Morley do not suit our requirements.

The next most serious question to ponder is that the Mahommedan cause will be jeopardized by the new scheme As section 12 of Lord Morley's Scheme has it, the Hindus and Mahommedan members to Council will be returned by the entire body composing the electoral colleges. Since the Hindus in most provinces will naturally be in the majority, the Mahommedan who is more in sympathy with the Hindus may obtain more votes than another Mahommedan candidate who is preferred by the Mahommedans. Surely in that case, the Mahommedan interest will by no means be served when the right man is not elected. It sounds very well to hear that the Hindus and Mahommedans should work together in harmony, but past events are a criterion to assure us that a difference exists between the Hindus and the Mahommedans, and that their interests, aims and objects cannot be one. The Mahommedans are a distinct community with interests of their own, which are not shared by the other communities. If each section returns its own members, there can be no objection entertained, but when it is left to the combined body of Hindus and Mahommedan members of the electoral college, there is a danger of not serving the sectional interest rightly and satisfactorily. Men who are in sympathy with the Hindus in their boycott policy will be elected, and thereby the community as a whole can have no chance to return the member whom they count upon as one who would serve their purpose. Section 12 of Lord Morley's Despatch may give one the idea that class representation is fully secured, but a careful perusal would dispel such an idea.

Again, the next most important point which will affect both the Mahommedan interest and the interest of the Government is the adoption of a non-official majority in the provincial council. It is Utopian to accept the realization of peaceful working between the two classes; and as matters stand as they

are, this Scheme of Lord Morley will not tend to the material benefit of the Mahommedans. The Mahommedans being in a small minority, the Hindus would carry before them everything to their liking and would not care the least as to how it affects the Mahommedan interest or not. It is of the utmost importance—nay a necessity—that this should not be put into force. The present political crisis does not admit of a non-official majority, and it behoves us therefore to ask Government to see that the official majority predominates in the provincial councils not only to safeguard its rights, but also to hold an even balance between the Hindus and the Mahommedans.

Yet another point should not be lost sight of, and that is the proposed inclusion of Indian members on the Executive Council. Here again, an important class like the Mahommedan community may be represented by a Hindu. Justice demands that a community which forms a fourth or a fifth of the entire population should have its own representatives, as in the Indian Council.

Mr. President and gentlemen, I have in a few words brought to your notice the great injustice that will be done to us as a community with regard to the electoral college method of voting and representation on the Executive Councils and also the non-official majority in the provincial councils. To safeguard the interest and the right of our community, Government should declare the number of Mahommedans entitled to seats on municipalities, district boards, local boards, and Legislative Councils, and it should 'commensurate', in the words of our appeal to His Excellency Lord Minto, 'not merely with their numerical strength, but also with their political importance, and the value of the contribution which they make to the defence of the Empire' and in consideration of the 'position which they occupied in India, a little more than a hundred years ago, and of which the traditions have not naturally faded from their minds.'

The political importance of the community and other reasons demand that the number declared for seats on the councils be more than the ratio of the number of the Mahommedans to the total population of the province, and as provision is made for election in the electoral college for members being returned in proportion to the population, the remaining number must be returned by nomination. This, unfortunately, is lost sight of in the Scheme by Lord Morley, although, Lord Minto has mentioned it in his proposal. It is also contrary to the reply Lord Minto gave to the All-India Mahommedan Deputation, when His Excellency was pleased to say that the Mahommedan claim would be considered according to the numerical strength and political importance of the community. In this original scheme, Lord Minto reserved four seats out of 28 and there was room for more Mahommedans being returned by election. Roughly calculating, therefore, we hoped to secure not less than eight Mahommedan members for the Imperial Council out of 28, and the League prayed for a still larger number, but the present scheme shows only five to be the maximum in the enlarged Council.

With these remarks I would support the resolutions moved by the President; and I am of the opinion that in the interest of our community, we should respectfully draw the immediate attention of both Lord Morley and Lord Minto to the injustice that will be done to the community, if this paragraph 12 is not altered to suit our purpose, and embody such objections to the Scheme as are detrimental to the interest of the Mahommedan community in the form of a memorial.

Mr. Mohammad Ali said :

The views which have been expressed just now by the representative Mussulmans of several provinces of India have impressed me greatly for two reasons. On the subject of offering thanks to Government opinions have differed. There are among us men who, while emphatically protesting against the inefficiency of the means of protecting the Mussulman minority and the inadequacy of a reservation of seats in the Council Chambers in favour of Mussulmans in proportion merely to their ratio to the total population of India, are still anxious to thank to the large hearted Secretary of State and the no less generous Viceroy for the general and broad policy of reforms foreshadowed in the former's recent Desptach, which is rightly hoped to open a new chapter in the political life our motherland, I myself am a humble unit in the ranks of such men. There are others among us who accept all the reservations of the group to which I belong, but are ready to thank Government not only for what is given, but also and mainly for what has rightly been withheld. I believe, you Mr. President, belong to this latter group. But there is a third group among us, entitled to great consideration not only on account of numbers but also on account of the intensity of its feeling for our co religionists which thinks that it would be almost hypocritical to thank anybody at the present moment, when the method devised by the final authority in the Government for our protection is honestly and rightly considered by us to be the surest means of our political annihilation. I have been greatly impressed, as I said, by this difference of opinion. But I have been still more impressed by the solid unanimity that runs through all these differences. Let us consider our position. We are representatives of our co-religionists in various parts of this Empire, and have travelled to Amritsar to discuss matters vital to our political existence.

This is no mass meeting, no huge demonstration such as we have been used to seeing and hearing of every Christmas when the Congress holds its sittings. If we come to exchange ideas and views, to discuss important questions from all possible points of view, rather than to voice only certain opinions held by a few men and decided upon long before we meet, let there be no futile effort at an artificial unanimity. Such unanimity is necessary for demonstrations and mass meetings, but it is not essential, and is in fact injurious in a meeting such as this, when we meet primarily to exchange views and ideas and only incidentally to impress others. We speak to each other and not to a gallery. The impression that we should therefore try to

make on Government and our neighbours must not be one of numbers or of a delusive unanimity, but of our representative character, the carefulness of our deliberations and, above all, of the soundness of our views. To arrogate to ourselves such titles as a 'National Congress' or to try to secure an artificial unanimity can only end in one thing. That road only leads to Surat.

I think that in spite of all its defects, the Scheme of Reforms which we are now discussing entitles its framers to our hearty and sincere thanks and congratulations. We have changed a great deal, and on the whole for the better during the last 16 years, and the system of government must also change. Evolution is the best preventive of a revolution. Our rulers must adjust themselves to the changed circumstances of the ruled. If political fanatics, can we silence those who say that they are in some measure due to the tardiness of our political evolution. Much as it may be necessary, it is always a bad policy to correct with the right arm the mistake of the brain. But we can turn aside from the contemplation of recent horrors to rejoice in the future that is foreshadowed in these Reforms.

You, Mr. President, have analysed the reforms in the spirit of the lawyer and can congratulate the Reformers, not only for what has been conceded, but also for what has been withheld. My own temperament does not permit me to view them merely in their legal aspect. I like to think not only of the present but to picture to myself the glorious vision of the future. To my mind the significance of the Reforms lies not so much in what they are as in what they promise. It has been said in some quarters that the Reforms are due to a liberal government and, particularly, to Secretary of State Lord Morley's antecedents. I concur with this view to a large extent, but I feel that it is not one party, much less one person that is bound by the pledges of to-day.

I feel that the honour of the British Government, the honour of the British nation has been pledged to us for the fair promise of the future. Lord Morley and the Liberal Party have taken their stand on a policy from which no minister and no party can recede without jeopardizing the honour and the safety of the British nation. That policy is not a nation's policy, and the word of a sovereign has been given to us once more, 50 years after our Sovereign Lady Victoria gave it to us unasked. It is for this rather than for the meagre provisions of a single Despatch that we should thank the Government. And if I can judge for you, I am sure you will all readily thank the Government on this score. But beyond thanks of this nature, we certainly owe nothing to the Secretary of State. The Viceroy who was conversant with the details of the situation had proposed a scheme for our representation which would have secured us a voice in the council Chambers of the State. But the Secretary of State who had only a distant acquaintance with our peculiar position in India failed to provide for our representation, because instead of relying on the advice of the careful and circumspect Viceroy whom he has so often and so justly praised, His Lordship listened to the sanctimonious apostles of unity. I had often marvelled how a

philosopher and a literary man had so long escaped the pitfalls which beset the path of such a person when he begins to reform a world entirely different from the one in which he has himself lived and moved, without even those advantages which the much maligned 'six-week-expert' has been offering a first hand acquaintance with this new world. But even Lord Morley, who had hitherto made the needed allowance for such a difference in not rushing into reforms that did not suit India, at last failed to recognize one of the most important differences between Great Britain and our own country. This difference is that in India the line of cleavage between various political interests is not territorial but denominational. Moreover, in India the religious creed of man does not only stand for his relation with his Maker and is not only a spiritual difference; it has in the course of many centuries become a strong temporal difference, and stands for a different outlook on life, different mode of living, different temperament and necessarily different politics.

It is indeed curious that a philosopher like Lord Morley should have mistaken the accident of representation for its very essence. It is indeed a mere accident that in great Britain the territorial divisions mark off rival interests also. But it is wrong to assume that Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow and Birmingham are represented in the British Parliament separately because they are different localities, rather than clearly marked off interests, it is as such that they are represented and not because the territorial limits as such are distinct. Look at the religious demarcation between the various countries included in the United Kingdom : were it not for the accident that Ireland is distinctly Catholic, Scotland Presbyterian, and that non-comformity has its habitat in Wales, whereas England has an established Church of its own, there would have resulted an awful confusion if representation had been based, as it now is, on territorial divisions. Imagine a devotee of the Church of England returned by the votes of a majority of his own way of thinking, but resident in Wales, returning him to Parliament to propose the establishment of the Church of England in that principality. Imagine a follower of Knox returned by the Presbyterian majority from Ireland proposing that there should be no Popery in that distressful country. Can you not imagine the wrath of Mr. Llyod George and Dr. Clifford, and Mr. Redmond and the Nationalists ? And can you not imagine the humour of the situation when the M. Ps. returned by the majority boasted, with a merry twinkle in their eye, that they spoke in the name and on behalf of a United Wales or a United Ireland, and denounced the Non-Conformists and the Catholics, who of course could not be returned to Parliament by the opposite party to raise a foolish cry ?

I make a present of this glorious vision of unity to the Secretary of State. But to you in India, I can give no better instance of such confusion than the opinions of the Indian 'National' Congress. Because a Maulvi Liakat Hussain has said so, the Congress gives out in the name of all Mussulmans

that they are all against the Partition of Bengal, excepting that 'man of no moment', my friend the Hon. Nawab Bahadur of Dacca. Because a Mr. Haider Raza has joined the Congress, all Mussulmans are represented to be in full sympathy of every demand of Congress. By the way I hear this gentlemen has joined the ranks of the extremists and has very logically ceased to be, in the opinion of the moderates, a true representative of Mussulmans. Mr. Asquith complained of these 'mysterious divinations' which inform the House of Lords that the country does not want measures passed by a huge majority of the House of Commons. But a colleague of Mr. Asquith recommends a system of election which would regularize such 'mysterious divinations', because unlike that 'Annexe of the Tory Party in the Commons' against which the Liberals are arming themselves, our House of Lords would be composed of members of our own community but mandatories of the majority of our political rivals. Lord Morley began by devising a system for the protection of Mussulmans and ended by inventing a system of political ventriloquism. He has reserved a number of seats, though to few, in favour of members of our community. We are therefore apparently assured a hearing. But it will be only apparently that we would be heard. The lips and the tongue would be of Muslims, but, like the oracles of ancient shrines, the voice that of the Brahmins. We complained that our co-religionists were not elected as members of Legislative Councils. That grievance would be now removed. For our own sword is being sharpened to cut our throat.

Lord Morley had not far to look to find how dangerous it was to base representation on territorial division in countries in which religions or racial distinctions were greater and more significant than territorial demarcation. There are many countries in Europe which could offer a warning or a guidance to so eminent a scholar of politics. France, Austria, Russia and Turkey could furnish enough of both. Take the last named only. Are not the interests of Christian and Jew, Muslim and Christian, Latin Christianity and Orthodox Church, Patriarchate and Exarchate and Metropolitanate different and even conflicting in that country ? And if they are conflicting, would territorial representation be adequate protection for an Israelite in an anti-Semite district in Austria or France, or an Armenian in a Kurdish locality in Turkey ? Nay, why go so far ? I would request His Lordship to cast his glance at Ireland itself. That Island is also part of the United Kingdom along with Scotland. But between the union of Scotland and the union of Ireland how strange an analogy and how strange a contrast ? Is not Ulster responsible for much of this contrast which has made a full union of Ireland with England impossible ? But what is Ulster in its importance to the greater Ulster that exists in India, the Ulster of Islam ? And what protection does Lord Morley make for our Ulster ? Only this that the representatives for Ulster must be the nominees of the rest of Ireland : dummies to present men who think and suggest and feel, players that must not utter a word on the stage, puppets to dance as the wirepuller manipulates them. We wish to

congratulate his Lordship on his political workmenship. We cannot congratulate him on his encouragement of political jugglery.

The sanctimonious apostles of unity contend that the interests of Mahommedans do not differ from those of Hindus; and if the wish were farther to the thought, I would say Amen. But let us not be ruined by political ambiguities. When they talk of interests, let us ask of what interests they talk. The ultimate interests of Hindus and Mahommedans are certainly the same. They were the same when Sivaji revolted against Aurangzeb or when the situation described in *Anand Math* existed. The interests, in that sense, of the whole of humanity are the same. The ultimate interests of all men are identical. But because human beings have not all risen yet to such a lofty conception of their essential unity, because we have not reached the millenium in which the strong only protect the weak, the thief only protects the property of the rich, white bureaucrat only lives for the good of able Congress men, and Mr. Tilak and Mr. Gokhale only work for the good of us all, that the expensive machinery of administration, the police, the magistracy, judges and juries, and specially elected non-official members of Legislative Councils have to be tolerated. The position of different societies in the scale of political evolution is judged according to the degree to which each has eliminated the personal equation from the principles that guide in its system of government. It is therefore a retrograde step in our political evolution to leave us at the mercy of an angelic majority that invariably thinks of the unity of India's ultimate interest. It is not the ultimate interests that have caused all the horrible crimes of short-sighted humanity, all the bloody wars of ancient and modern times, and all the bitterness that rankles even to-day in human breasts. The analogy of litigant in order to give the same right to the other party to the suit. Even the best regulated families, differences sometimes lead to litigation. Would anyone permit one brother to say to the other, when they have counter claims against each other, 'Let me choose your advocate for you', or would the judge be justified in saying to one of them, 'Why have an advocate ? You have friends in me and the jury ?'

A good deal of nonsense has been talked and written about special treatment and 'free competition'. The Mussulmans ask for no special treatment, and they are fighting against political monopolists. The *Indian Daily News* said of denominational representation that 'It is certainly an open question whether the bracing air of competition would not be a healthier atmosphere for the now rapidly awakening Mahommedan community than the hot-house culture that the Government seems so anxious to introduce.' But who has ever heard of 'free competition' between constituencies for representation ? Would Ulster be satisfied with the doctrine of free competion if the members for Ulster were to be elected by free competition with the Majority of Catholic Ireland ? Would England be satisfied with an arbitration court at The Hague in which her representatives were chosen by means of free competition by the larger populations of other European countries ? The member-

ship of the Legislative Council is not a lucrative or honourable appointment any more than the membership of an arbitration court, to be competed for by contending parties. It is the delegation of its deputy by each of several separate interest to a comprehensive body charged with the difficult task of legislation for all of them according to their united wishes, rather than the reward of competing interests in a struggle for existence. The numerically weak cannot and must not be allowed to go to the wall. This is so plain that I cannot believe an astute politician like Lord Morley could have been misled by any talk of free competition. His deception is due to more persuasive, because more plausible, Pharisees. 'Denominational representation would accentuate religious differences', that is the argument of apostles of unity. A pretty phrase this, 'accentuate religious differences'. But has it been ascertained whether this measure will be the cause or is already the consequence of religious differences ? Are they not unfortunately but too patent ? Are they not sufficiently accentuated ? Have we not reached the bottom of these wretched squabbles ? I am second to no Pharisee in detesting these pitiful struggles of communities that are due to no higher consideration than the lives of goats and cows, or the use of an Arabic or Sanskrit work. But howsoever we may detest them, we cannot be blind to their existence. Let it be admitted for argument's sake that the fault lies wholly with the fanatics of Islam, with their *jezzia* and *jehad*. Let it be believed that the tolerant Hindus have tolerated something more than the bare physical existence of nearly as many millions of men of their own faith as the Mussulman fanatics. Let it be believed that instead of every third Hindu being untouchable by the other two Hindus, including Mr. Tilak, the *Mang* and the *Mahar*, the *Dhed* and the *Chamar*, the *Bhangi* and the *Pariah* are men within the meaning of the terms, 'the fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man'. Let it be believed that these castes euphemistically called 'the depressed classes'—depression far worse than any foreign oppression—are allowed the elementary rights of existence. Even then the fanaticism of Mussulmans and the spirit of revenge which it gives rise to are facts that cannot be ignored. Is the Government to ignore such a fact in giving Indians territorial franchise without any provision for the protection of the minority ? We all desire to see the end of religious and sectional squables. But we must build on the foundation of facts rather than of pious wishes. Statesmanship consists in building the ideal fabric on the foundation of reality. It is foolish to ignore what is in the desire to achieve what ought to be. The ostrich may be an excellent idealist, but he is a poor politician. Let us condemn every measure of Government that tends to turn solidarity into disintegration. But let us recognize the practical good sense also that does not ignore the universally acknowledged disintegration that is of our own creation.

It is no use warning the guileless Mahommedan fish that rushes at the bait offered by the Government, if the Hindu fish has no better record of its own discrimination or contentment. The greater political blunder of an ex-

Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, who is now denouncing political blunder of others has not been forgotten. Did not the apostles of unity swallow a tasty bait, and begin thereafter the boycott of every word of Arabic or Persian origin in that glorious language, Urdu, the camp language of their darling Akbar and his successors, throwing into the dust-heap the shining coins of Arab and Ajam mints which enriched our common treasury. That was by no means a conspicuous example of catholicity and tolerance. I wish my Hindu friends would only learn the disillusioning but useful fact that there is no short cut to patriotism or unity.

Thou'lt come, knit men, join nation unto nation,
But not for us who watch to-day and burn.
Thou'lt come, but after what long years of trial,
Weary watching, patient longing, dull denial.

I know that there is current in India a view of unity which is the dream of all spiritualists, It looks forward to unity in Nirvana, the annihilation of the finite and its incorporation with the infinite. It is possible that in a confused application of this view to more mundane affairs our friends desire our annihilation and the Nirvana of the minority in the majority. But even this short cut has been tried before, and those who walked along this path discovered, though too late, that led only to their destruction. The dream of unity led Spain to banish all Moriscoes from its territories after the fall of Granada. The same glorious visions caused the Massacre of St. Bartholomew and the expulsion of Huguenots from France. But did Spain succeed or fail ? Was it not the other day that Catholic Clergymen were roughly handled in the selfsame Paris, and inventories taken of their churches by free-thinking Parisians ? The unity that is sought through the annihilation of minorities reacts upon itself. An even handed justice commends the ingradients of poisoned chalice to our own lips. At any rate the Mussulmans cannot be expected to take the poisoned cup of martyrdom on others. No Nirvana can attract him; and those who have succeeded in inducing some guileless men to commit political hara kiri must remember that the Mussulmans in general are rather tenacious in their longing to live.

One word more and I have done. When we show distrust to the system of the before mentioned representation, we do not say that every Hindu leader who talks of unity and wishes to bring it about by mixed electoral colleges is insincere and wishes only to lure us to our destruction. It is not that. No, these leaders come and go, but the bad system goes on for ever. Lord Morley could not be unfamiliar with our line of reasoning, for the Liberals' Cabinet has just now announced a similar line or policy with reference to Germany and the dreadnaughts. England and its ministers do not distrust Germany. But Germany or no Germany, their supremacy on the high seas is essential to their national existence, and cannot be risked on the words, no matter how sincere, of an Emperor or Chancellor of the *Faterland*. Circumstances may change other Emperors and Chancellors may

be in power, and the tempting weakness of England may lead them to forget all the sincere pledges of to-day. An unprotected minority cannot rely on the sole asset of the sincerity of the majority's present leaders. We cannot lay down two keels to every one of the Hindus. But let our dreadnaughts, even one to their two, be our own and not theirs in all but the flag they fly. Otherwise, circumstances may and would change, and our unprotected condition would tempt the leaders of rival communities, who could not then be expected to remember the sincere pledges of long ago. The question is one of our life and death. We cannot jeopardize our existence on promises, sincere or otherwise, and must see this thing to the end.

Sheikh Abdul Qadir said that they were not in duty bound to thank Lord Morley. The principle of his scheme conflicted with those on which they had so far been basing Muslim policy since the days of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Moreover, the proposal to nominate electors was absolutely unprecedented, and did not stand the test of reason. If the Secretary of State recognized the principle of the nomination of electors, what prevented him from recognizing the justice and expediency of the same principle in the nomination of members ? He emphatically supported the last two resolutions, but agreed to the first only in deference to the wishes from the Chair.

Mr. Yakub Hasan of Madras remarked that the Mussulmans of the Madras Presidency had already passed a resolution conveying the sense of the three resolutions now proposed.

Khwaja Gul Mohammad, agreed with Sheikh Abdul Qadir's views, while Khwaja Ahmad Shah was in favour of passing the last two resolutions, but suspending the expression of thanks to Lord Morley till the time when the scheme was modified in accordance with Mahommedan wishes. On Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk Bahadur pointing out that there would be nothing improper in conveying thanks for what was acceptable to them, and pressing their views on Government on points where the Mussulmans felt agreed, Khwaja Ahmed Shah did not formally move any amendment.

Nawab Khwaja Sir Salimullah Khan Bahadur, K. C. S. I., Nawab Bahadur of Dacca, said :

We have all heard the speech of the President on the Despatch dealing with the Reform Scheme. The ability with which he has handled the subject can leave no doubt in our mind that he has given our community the benefit of the remarkable talents he possesses for dealing with political questions that affect the interest of our community. The view that he takes of the Despatch is one that may possibly strongly appeal to you. His power of exposition and criticism, I have the highest regard for. In fact I have a greater regard for it, I claim, than any one of you have; yet I venture to submit to you that I have so far held views on the question of the protection of the minorities different from those pronounced by the learned President. I read the Despatch of Lord Morley in this connection as giving us, the Mahommedans, pure and separate denominational representation, to use the President's

language, from start to finish. It was on the strength of this opinion that I have of the Despatch that I gladly went with the All-India Loyal Representative Deputation to His Excellency the Viceroy to thank him and the Secretary of State for their liberal concessions. I was then, and am still, under impression that justice has been administered to the Hindus and Mahommedans alike, and that the 25 Mahommedans out of the 100 in the college, the electoral college, will elect Mahommedan representatives separately from the remaining 75 Hindus. I feel certain that when you approach their Lordship with the interpretation, as given by the President, of the Despatch on this point, you will find that the interpretation given by me is correct. Yet in as much as I have strong faith in the good sense of our President and the present assembly, I, in spite of my own convictions, think that a fair amount of doubt has been raised to justify our supporting the President in putting the resolutions before us from the chair, and I therefore, to maintain the solidarity of our attitude in relation to political action, freely join you in support.

The resolutions were carried by acclamation.

THIRD SITTING

The third sitting opened at 11 a. m. on 31 December and closed at 2.30 p. m. Syed Ali Imam was in the Chair and members and visitors were present as on the previous day.

In a spirited speech, full of facts and figures, Mian Mahommad Shafi moved the following resolutions :

RESOLUTION IV

The All-India Muslim League is of opinion that the principle of purely denominational representation should be extended to all municipal and district boards throughout India, a principle which has already worked with success in a large number of municipalities in the Punjab.

The resolution was seconded by Khwaja Gul Mohammad.

Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhry, supporting the resolution, said :

The resolution which has been so ably moved and seconded just now has my heartiest support and approval. The municipal and district boards are but initial rungs in the ladder of self-government and if denomination representation is extended to these we shall have gained a very important step towards adequate representation in the Legislative Chamber of the Empire. A community which has a glorious past and which forms a fourth or fifth of the entire population should have adequate representation on the municipal and district boards which are the embodiments of local self-government. If the denominational principles applied to the municipal boards in the Punjab has worked there successfully, there is no reason why the principle should not

be applied to both municipal and district boards uniformly throughout the Indian Empire. These boards have to deal with important matters concerning of the locality, and it is a matter greatly to be deplored that the Mahommedan tax-payers are not adequately represented. To overcome such defects, Government ought to declare the number of Mahommedan members on these boards in proportion to their numerical strength and political importance, and they should be returned by the Mahommedan electors residing in any particular municipality or within the limits of a district board. In some municipal areas, the Mahommedans may not stand a good comparison to the other classes in point of numbers and taxes, but the political importance of the community should be taken into consideration in the declaration of the numbers. Need I say, gentlemen, that the resolution has the hearty support of all of us assembled here.

The resolution was also supported by Mr. Mohammed Ali, Mr. Muzharul Haque and Mr. Yakub Hasan.

RESOLUTION V

Sheikh Abdul Qadir proposed :

In view of the appointment of Indian members to the Executive Councils of the Governor-General and the Governors of Bombay and Madras, the All-India Muslim League hopes that the claims of the Indian Mahommedans will be duly considered.

The motion was supported by Raja Naushad Ali Khan, Sahebzada Aftab Ahmad Khan, Maulvi Mahbub Alam and Nawab Naseer Hasan Khan Khyal. It was passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION-VI

The All-India Muslim League considers it necessary that a committee should be appointed with full powers to draft and finally adopt an address embodying the resolutions relating to the Reform Scheme of the Secretary of State, unanimously passed by the League, and to make all necessary arrangements for presenting it to H. E. the Viceroy, with His Excellency's permission, at an early date through a Deputation of such members of the League as are able to wait upon His Excellency, and that the President of this session be the chairman of the said committee, which should hold its sitting at a place convenient to the chairman, the quorum consisting of four members, and that the following members of the League should form the said committee : Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk Bahadur; the Hon'ble Nawab Bahadur of Dacca; the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhry; Sahebzada Aftab Ahmad Khan, Bar-at-Law; Mr. Fazal-e-Hasan, Bar-at-Law; Khan Bahadur Mian Mohammed Shafi, Bar-at-Law (Secretary of the Committee); Maulvi Rafi-ud-din Ahmad, Bar-at-Law; Sheikh Abdul Aziz,

Editor, *Observer*; Nawab Naseer Hasan Khan Khyal; Mr. Yakub Hasan; Mr. Mazharul Haque, Bar-at-Law (Secretary of the Committee); Maulvi Rafi-ud-din Ahmad, Bar-at-Law; Khan Bahadur Sarfraz Hasan Khan; Mr. Mohammed Ali, B. A. (Oxon); Mr. Nabiullah, Bar-at-Law; Mr. Abdus Salam Rafiqi; Khan Bahadur Khwaja Yusuf Shah; Khan Bahadur Sheikh Ghulam Sadiq; Sheikh Abdul Qadir, Bar-at-Law; Mr. Abdul Aziz, Bar-at-Law; Raja Naushad Ali Khan; Haji Mohammad Musa Khan, Offg. Hony. Secretary, All-India Muslim League; and Syed Ali Imam, Bar-at-Law (Chairman). And further that this League also deems it necessary to empower the said committee to send some representatives of the League to wait upon the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India and bring to His Lordship's notice the just and legitimate claims of the Mahonmedans of India.

In moving the above resolution, Raja Naushad Ali Khan said :

It is not necessary for me to say much in moving this resolution. You know to what extent the interests of Mussulmans have suffered by their silence and also to what extent rival interests have triumphed because the political missionaries of our neighbours have succeeded in quarters whereas, as our President has so justly said, our voice has only to reach to be appreciated. This League has already unanimously and heartily passed three resolutions moved from the Chair on the subject of Reform Scheme. I am one of the representatives from the Province of Oudh, and though I gave a silent vote in favour of resolutions yesterday, I take this opportunity of saying that Oudh heartily supports them. The conclusions at which we unanimously arrived are, therefore, clear. We have only to add to them weighty arguments to support them and draw up a memorial in which we should plead our just and righteous cause. We should then arrange to obtain His Excellency the Viceroy's permission to wait upon His Excellency and lay before him our just grievances. But as the final authority is the Secretary of State, we should also arrange to send some representatives to England to acquaint his Lordship and the Cabinet with the true state of our community and the well-justified apprehensions it has for its future, if the interests of the minorities are not protected better than under the system outlined in paragragh 12 of the Secretary of State's Despatch. I am sure there can be no two opinions about the question, and I trust you will pass the resolution unanimously. A word or two may be said about the machinery designed for the work before us. I think our President, Mr. Ali Imam, should be requested to draw up this memorial, as he is in every way the most proper person to do it, for not only have we had proofs of his great political ability in the two speeches of yesterday and the resolutions passed by us, but also because, as our President of this session, he moved those important resolutions.

We leave the selection of the place of meeting to him, as he is a busy man and we must seek his convenience; and though after having settled the conclusions at which we have unanimously arrived yesterday, we could very

well leave the whole work of the memorial to him, it is better to appoint a committee, with representatives of the various provinces. The quorum for meetings is such that the work of the committee can go on without hitch and without delay, for delay at this hour is dangerous. Our deputation should consist of every member of the League who could wait upon the Viceroy in Calcutta, unless circumstances make it necessary to curtail the number of its members. This is necessary because we should throw the door open to all members of this representative League. The committee proposed by me should be our plenipotentiaries, for it will be impossible to refer to the whole League for the settlement of every little point. The committee's representative character will, I trust, make it acceptable to all. Gentlemen, I ask for unanimous support of this resolution.

The resolution had the hearty support of Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk Bahadur, Sheikh Ghulam Sadiq, Sheikh Abdul Aziz and other members; and was adopted unanimously.

RESOLUTION VII

The All-India Muslim League, after very carefully considering the prayers contained in the address of the Deputation of the Deccan Provincial Muslim League that waited upon His Excellency the Governor of Bombay in September 1908, and His Excellency's reply to the same, regrets that the just and reasonable requests of the Mahommedans of the Bombay Presidency have not met with that considerate reception on the part of the Bombay Government which they deserved. This League cannot believe that the real representation of the Mahommedans in the municipalities can adequately be secured by rectifying, by the dubious means of Government nominations, the inevitable deficiencies of electors on a non-denominational basis, which has been amply proved by the experience of such elections in that Presidency during quarter of a century; and this League is strongly of opinion that Government nominations cannot but create in the Mahommedan community an indifference towards civil affairs which is sure to affect their interests prejudicially, that they will to a large extent, defeat the purpose of local self-government which was primarily intended to be an instrument of political popular education. Nor in view of the very serious difficulties pointed out in the Government of India's Despatch of October 1908 to the Secretary of State with the reference to that plan, can this League accept as proper the suggestion of the Bombay Government to give favourable consideration to selections made by voluntary associations of Mahommedans. This League also holds that, in view of the great need of encouraging the educational efforts of Mahommedans and the importance of proper instruction in Urdu, which in addition to being the Lingua Franca of the Indian Empire, is without a doubt the Vernacular of the Mahommedans of Bombay Presidency—the request of the Deccan Muslim League in favour of the establishment of an

Urdu Training College and the appointment of qualified inspecting officers for Urdu schools merits a more favourable reconsideration. This League further believes that His Excellency the Governor's reply to the request of the Deccan Muslim League recommending that a due proportion of Mahommedans shall always find a place in the public service has been due to a serious misconception as regards the true nature of the said request; and this League, while not in the least desiring that undue favour should be shown to Mahommedans, or that the standard of qualification for public service should be lowered in their favour to the prejudice of the efficiency of administration, very emphatically holds that it is essential for the efficiency of administration, as well as for the proper adjustment of the political balance, that so long as qualified Mahommedans are available for the public service, they should be employed to the exclusion of members of other communities till their due proportion, according to their importance and population, is secured.

The motion called forth a dignified speech from the mover, Nawab-Viqar-ul-Mulk Bahadur, who was strongly backed up by other members of the League, and was adopted.

The following resolutions were unanimously adopted :

RESOLUTION VIII

Proposed by Mr. Mazharul Haque and seconded by Mr. Mahommad Umar :

That in view of the uncertainty in the administration of the Hindu and the Mahommedan Law, in consequence of which grave dissatisfaction is often caused among the people, the Right Hon. the Secretary of State be moved, through the Government of India, to appoint a Mussulman and a Hindu as members on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

RESOLUTION IX

Proposed by Mian Mohammad Shafi and seconded by Sheikh Abdul Qadir :

In view of the necessity and importance, under the existing circumstances of India, of each community being duly represented in the administration, the All-India Muslim League considers the number of Mahommedans employed in the various branches of the public service as absolutely inadequate, and strongly urges the Government to give the Mahommedan community that share in the public service to which it is entitled by reason of its importance and numerical strength.

Mr. Mahommed Yakub, in supporting the resolution, observed :

The number of Mahommedans in the judicial service of the Province of Agra is very inadequate; and unless prompt and effective measures are taken to make up the efficiency, the Mahommedans will, in the course of a few

years, nearly disappear from the higher grade of this most important branch of Government service. In the last quarter of the year 1908, out of 21 sub-judges, there were only four Mahommedans, of whom two are on the eve of retirement and will, according to the gradation given in the civil list, be succeeded by Hindus; and the whole Province of Agra, one of the most advanced Mahommedan provinces in India, has only two Mussulman sub-judges. In the grade of Munsif, the situation is far being satisfactory, and out of a total number of 69, there are only 12 Mahommedans.

Although we can never admit that our share in the Government service or anywhere else should only be in proportion to our numerical strength, and in any kind of representation, direct or indirect, we justly claim a share equal to our Hindu brethren, owing to our special importance and the position which we occupied in India a little more than a hundred years ago, still even according to the view taken by Sir Antony (now Lord) Macdonell, the most unsympathetic English Governor that the Mahommedans of India ever had, out of every five there ought to be two Mahommedans in the judicial line.

RESOLUTION X

Proposed by Mr. Mohammad Ali and seconded by Sheikh Abdul Aziz :

That Government be asked to appoint a commission to enquire into the number, general purposes and manner of administration of Mussulmans endowments designed merely for public benefit.

RESOLUTION XI

Proposed by Mr. Nabiullah, and seconded by Maulvi Habibur Rahman Khan :

In view of the disintegration of Mussulman families consequent on the misinterpretation of the Mussulman Law Family Wakf, and the disastrous effects resulting there from to the well-being of the community, it is necessary for the Legislature to enact some measure to validate the Mussulman Law of Wakf in favour of the endower's family and descendants with any safeguard that may be considered expedient against the perpetration of fraud.

RESOLUTION XII

Proposed by Mian Mohammad Shafi and seconded by Raja Naushad Ali Khan :

In view of the existing conditions in some parts of the country, the All-India Muslim League fully recognizes the urgent necessity, on the part of Government, of taking strong action to punish, adequately and without delay, the dastardly crimes of the kind which have recently been committed, and to deal effectively with anarchism and other seditious associations which are the

cause of these crimes; and expresses its hearty approval of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act recently passed by the Imperial Legislature.

RESOLUTION XIII

Proposed by Mr. Nabiullah and supported by Maulvi Mahboob Alam :

The All-India Muslim League deplores the spirit of recent anti-Asiatic legislation in the British colonies of South Africa, especially in the Transvaal, which has placed a great strain on the loyalty of our countrymen, both here and in such colonies, and considers it as one of its bounden duties to the British Government, as well as to its African colonies concerned, to inform it of the likely mischievous consequences of colonial legislation, based on racial distinction, humiliating to H.M. the King Emperor's Indian subjects; and this League has grave apprehensions that unless the good sense of the colonies helps them to devise means to end the present crisis in such colonies by some permanent compromise, and failing that, unless the Imperial Government successfully asserts its undoubted supremacy in matters of Imperial importance to obliterate racial distinctions in political life within the Empire, the reforms foreshadowed in the Despatch of the Secretary of State for India may fail to exercise that wholesome influence on the present situation in India which they are intended to exercise.

RESOLUTION XIV

In view of the recent utterances of Dr. Rashbehari Ghose and the action of the Madras Congress in passing a resolution against the Partition of Bengal, the League felt that it was necessary to inform the Government and the public of the Mahommedan attitude in the matter, and unanimously adopted a strongly worded resolution in favour of the Partition. A very large number of the members of the League, hailing from all parts of the country, supported the resolution, which was moved by Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhry. He said :

The advocates of withdrawal of Partition have repeatedly urged that the unrest and excitement would subside with the withdrawal. I confess I have not for myself been able to comprehend such a position, so persistently and strenuously advanced. Was the Partition synchronous with the unrest ? I ask you, gentlemen, to say aye or nay. I am sure that the interrogation would yield a unanimous nay. For even the most careless critics of events cannot deny that the unrest is of no recent growth, and that its origin dates back to a time far antecedent to the Partition of Bengal. Again, is it not natural to ask that if the root cause of the unrest and anarchism is the Partition of Bengal, why should the unrest and anarchism have spread over all of India ? It is therefore absolutely absurd to assert that the modification of the Partition would be followed by the subsidence of the anarchical spirit. The anarchical spirit has nothing to do with the Partition The exposures in the law courts of

the bomb conspiracies, of the train wrecking attempts, of the secret societies for the destruction of British rule, of the doings of the national dacoits, would go to show that the spirit of turbulance and terrorism is not a recent product, but has its roots in deep-seated plans and plots for the overthrow of the Government. Do the palliators of the unrest really know their constituents? Do they then really mean to tell us that the cry for *Swaraj* is a meaningless and absurd cry and would stop the moment the crime of Partition is atoned for by its withdrawal? People who have lived long enough in India would not, I am sure, submit to this sort of temfoolery.

Gentlemen, I can say one thing in the full confidence and courage of conviction; if the Partition was a blunder, a greater and graver blunder would be to withdraw or modify it. Indeed, it would be the most gregious blunder in the history of British India. I am not sure whether any sane administration would go to that extent, for while it would be a practical surrender of Pax Britannica into the hands of the vociferous agitators, it would also mean to the larger and more important population in Eastern Bengal, the Mussulmans, that the Government seeks not the happiness of the greatest number—the established, admitted and accepted principle of English political ethics—but is prone to climb down to the hectoring and terrorizin bodies of agitators. But what are the arguments against the partition? Up to now the stock argument with the anti-partitionists has been the mere sentimental one that it divides the Bengali Hindu race. Could not the Bengali Mussulmans say the same thing? Could not the Mussulmans, too, cry that the partition has divided the Bengali Mussulmans into two different provincial areas? Could not the Punjabi Mussulmans, in like manner, say that the creation of the Frontier Province divides them into two different political divisions? Could not, I ask, the Mahommedans of upper India similarly complain that the Punjab and the United Provinces break up a no less homogeneous people into two different political and administrative areas?

Could not Mussulmans have raised the standard of revolt when Delhi, Karnal and Gurgaon districts were transferred to the Punjab Province? Could not similarly the Biharis threaten disturbance because they have been included in the Bengal administration? Assam was separated in 1874 from Bengal and made into a separate Province. Could it not raise the same cry when, by the redistribution of 1905, it had to revert to the old order of being mixed up with Bengal? I must say that the enunciation of such a doctrine in the enunciation of a dangerous principle in the Governance of a country like India.

The duplication of the administrative machinery has not only raised the standard of efficiency in the government of the reconstituted province, but has afforded a great security of life and prosperity to the people. What was the state of affairs in the eastern part of the province, especially in the tracts watered by the Brahamputra, the Pudda and the Megna. They were so detached and segregated from the centre of administrative influence that it was impossible, under the old system, to have hoped for any improvement,

social, political, educational or commercial, before many long years to come.

The Partition has given a new life to the people in the Eastern Province. They are feeling a refreshing sense and a relief from the thraldom of...[1] Calcutta. They find their rights more quickly recognized and their existence and importance more adequately appreciated than they could as a mere appendage, as heretofore, of Western Bengal. They find that if...some 100 deputy magistrates and a like number of sub-deputies, *munsifs* and sub-registrars have had to be appointed, these appointments went to the children of the soil, Hindus and Mohammedans. In fact, the people feel that in neglected Eastern Bengal, the people have got what Ireland has so strenuously been fighting for, I mean home-rule and not rule from Calcutta.

I hope it would not be out of place if I attempted to meet the criticism of our Bengali Hindu friends on what they regard as the detriment to nationalism as they apprehend it by Partition. One is really very curious to hear from them the cry of unity and nationalism in danger. What is, pray, the real significance and import of this nationalism ? Does it mean a cementing together of the Bengali Hindus within themselves and outside with all other races ? Does the euphonious phrase 'Indian Nation' mean only and restrictedly the Hindus of the two Bengals ? Is not the mixing up and fusion of all the various races a consumation to be striven after and desired ? Why, then, I ask my Hindu friends, should there be the cry of the break up, the split up, the division and so forth of the Bengali Nation ? Is it to be assumed and adopted that the development of an Indian nationality should be synonimous with the development of the Bengali Hindu apart from and outside all other races and communities ? An eventual evolution of an Indian nationality logically means the fusion of all races ultimately into a homogenous whole. The cry of nationalism in danger cannot therefore come with good grace from our Bengali Hindu friends, when a portion of them is asked to cast its lot with the Assamese, another fraction asked to join the hands of fellowship with the Biharis, or another group required to mingle with the Orias. So far, therefore, the cry of nationalism in danger is not nationalism, but the spirit of exclusivism and privilege of monopoly.

OTHER BUSINESS

A representative sub-committee was appointed to revise the rules of the League.

Some donations of the All-India Muslim League Fund were announced : a donation of Rs. 1,500 from H. H. Sir Sultan Mohammad Shah Aga Khan, G.C.I.E., the permanent president of the All-India Muslim League; one of Rs. 500 from Raja Naushad Ali Khan, and another of Rs. 500 from Mr. Mazharul Haque.

The President addressed a few words to the audience, thanking them for the trouble taken and expressing satisfaction at the work that had been done.

[1] Omitted and appears to be an editorial mistake.

Khwaja Yusuf Shah, the President of the Reception Committee and Mr. Mohammad Umar, the Honorary Secretary of this Committee, were specially complimented for their untiring zeal and for the good arrangements they made for the session of the League at Amritsar. The proceedings concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chair, applause for the President, and three cheers for His Imperial Majesty the King Emperor.

Source: *Report* of Haji Mohammad Musa Khan : Pamphlet published by All-India Muslim League, Aligarh, 1 May 1909.

32

THE PIONEER ON CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

Now that we have before us the text of Lord Morley's speech in the House of Lords, it is permissible to consider some of its special features, and to see how it resembles and in what points it differs from others of the group of memorable speeches which he had delivered since he became responsible for the destinies of this country. Whatever may be thought of the policy of the present Secretary of State for India, everybody will admit that the speeches which he has been called upon to make, in explanation of the situation and in defence of his policy, in circumstances of great difficulty and under acute political pressure, have been of a very high order, and have displayed admirable qualities of imagination, of brooding prescience, and of skilful phrasing. It is open for critics to say that they would prefer a plain blunt man, with sound views about maintaining law and supporting the administrative authorities, to an artist in words or an anxious political philosopher with an inconvenient past of opinions. But however useful the plain, blunt man-of-affairs may be, in certain cases, it is obvious that no such person could have held the office of Secretary of State for India during the past three years in the present Ministry or in the present House of Commons. He would have been hopelessly out of place, hopelessly badgered and tormented, and finally ejected as a reactionary. In Lord Morley we have had a man who has not been afraid to attempt to reconcile liberalism of an advanced kind with the practical necessities of administering a dependency such as India. His difficulties have been mainly with his own followers, especially the more ardent and irresponsible members of the extreme left. He has not only had his intellectual past, his fixed notions of progress and liberty, his political conscience, so to say, to consider at every turn, but he has also had ever to keep an eye over his shoulder to make sure

that his party were following him. Therefore all his speeches in the House of Commons were framed on apologetic and declamatory lines. There were pictures of the dim millions of the Indian peoples, whose destiny was in the charge of his countrymen, of the great fabric of law and order which half unconsciously had been erected in this distant land by a long succession of zealous British administrators, of the danger of handling over the vast and delicate machine to the untried hands of the inhabitants themselves, of the chaos and walter which would result from a sudden throwing up of the task by the democracy of England. There were half plaintive utterances as to the greatness of the burden and as to the difficulty of adjusting the imperious requirements of the Civil Servant on the spot with the broader outlook of liberalism; and there were many protestations that inspite of his acquiescence in special acts of an arbitrary character and in repressive measures, they were really abhorrent to his nature and were wrung out of him by conviction of the imperious needs of time and circumstance. If we turn to his recent speech on constitutional reform, we find that it bears a family resemblance to the speeches which we have been considering. But there is also a perceptible difference. The difference may partly be due to the influence of a different atmosphere. The House of Lords is not the House of Commons. It is colder, and more critical, more prone to take what may be called in a business--view of things, decidedly sceptical about enthusiasms, and inclined to hold rhetoric cheap. Lord Morley is not indifferent to external influences, and in pitching his speech in an unimpassioned tone and in devoting himself mainly to the practical aspects of the scheme of reform, he paid a tribute to the peculiar character of the assembly which he was addressing. But it would probably be wrong to attribute the difference between this speech and its predecessors wholly to a changed atmosphere. What is noticeable about it is a great perception of the seriousness of the actual situation in this country, and a more explicit assertion of his intention to support the Government of India in such measures as they may deem essential for securing the safety of their rule. Man learns by experience and a Secretary of State is no exception to this providential result. Two years ago he seemed to think that the trouble in India was exaggerated, that the situation was very much better than when he assumed responsibility for Indian affairs, that it would yield to comparatively mild treatment, and that a Pandora's box of reforms would put everything right. It is not too much to say that his eyes have been opened by the events of the last six months. In his present speech there is a clear admission that the Government of India stand in need of every weapon of defence that they already possess, that they are fully justified in adding to their arms, and that they may be forced to add even stronger arms. 'I decline to take out of the hand of the Government of India any weapon that they have got, in circumstances so uncommon, so obscure, and so impenetrable as are the circumstances that surround them.' This was with reference to the deportation powers under

the Regulation of 1818. For the Summary Jurisdiction Act he accepted full responsibility, 'After all it is not our fault that we have had to bring in these measures. You must protect the lives of your officers. You must protect peaceful and harmless people, both Indian and European, from the blood-stained havoc of anarchic conspiracy. I deplore this necessity, but we are bound to face the facts. I myself recognise this necessity with infinite regret, and with something perhaps rather deeper than regret.' It may possibly be said that, having regard to the actual provisions of the Act and its sedulous endeavour to prevent abuse of the departures it makes from ordinary judicial procedure, this regret is somewhat overpitched. But there is a salutary power in the words, 'we are bound to face the facts'. If they are but faced honestly and frankly, a great step will have been gained. There are no doubt, 'risks', if not, 'frightful risks', to use Lord Morley's exact words, are 'involved in transfering in any form of degree what should be the ordinary procedure under the law to arbitrary personal discretion'. But risk is attendant on all exercise of power. Lord Morley has accepted the risk in approving the retention of the Regulation of 1818 and in agreeing to the Summary Jurisdiction Act. He quoted with approval Sir Norman Baker's statement that he would not hesitate to ask for stronger measures if they were found to be required. A Secretary of State who will face the facts and take the risk of departing from the ordinary law, on a case being made out, is in his right place.

No one will dissent from Lord Morley's hope that the British Government in its policy will succeed in attracting 'the good will which must after all be the real foundation of our power and strength in India', and there are not very many dissentients from the principle that 'a larger and more direct share in the Government of their country and in all the affairs of their country' should be given to the people of the country. The proviso which qualifies this statement, that the central power shall not be deprived of its authority, is the touch stone by which the actual programme of reforms should be judged. Lord Laudsdowne, in his statesman like speech, showed that this would guide him and his party in the detailed examination of the scheme. Lord Morley's emphatic statement that he was not attempting to set up a parliamentary system in India, and would for his part, 'have nothing to do with such an attempt' was evidently welcomed. This really draws the line between what is practicable and what is visionary. It is also clear from the debate that his view that reforms should not be delayed on account of the present disturbances was not challenged. It may indeed be said that he made too much of this point, and, possibly with the orator's instinct, battered an open door. The great argument against not delaying constitutional reforms, provided of course that the time has otherwise come for introducing them, is that the disturbances affect Bengal only, whereas reform will affect the whole of India. There is no good reason for depriving provinces which are loyal and contented of political benefits because one province happens to

behave badly. Lord Morley might have made this point. That he preferred to base his argument on high liberal principles of conciliation was perhaps an unconscious tribute to party. The passage on the 'two paths of folly' is affective, but is open to the criticism that it imputes to the advocates of strong government in this country, opinions which they do not possess. No responsible person wants to blow criminals or suspected criminals from guns, or to do away wholesale with the freedom of the press. But there are press laws in force in Germany, in Austria and in other countries many centuries in advance of India, which do not involve extinction of a free press, yet which are very much more stringent than anything we at present have here. The objectors to what is called 'freedom of the press' in this country are really objectors to unbridled license. They contend that a very moderate press law in the past would have saved the country from great trouble. They are not so foolish as to advocate the expulsion of Mill and Burke and other idols of Lord Morley from the bookstalls. There is a middle way. To impute folly and extreme courses to those who wish to see the Government of India strengthened is hardly fair to them, and is naturally exasperating to those whose views are travestied.

Source : The Pioneer, 6 January 1909.

33

TELEGRAM FROM MORLEY TO MINTO
7 January 1909

I rely on you very carefully to weigh Mahommedan objection in drafting regulations and considering working of electoral college. These objections appear to be two : (1) That proportional representation on purely numerical basis violates your assurance in 1906; (2) that to electoral college the Hindus may run opposition Mahommedan candidate of their own and carrying out his election. Both these objections along with appointment of Native Member to your Excecutive Council are basis of opposition of criticism here, and if the scheme is to stand, it will be necessary to find effective answers to them.

REPLY FROM MINTO TO MORLEY
8 January 1909

The two Mahommedan objections mentioned by you correctly describe position. I consider both objections perfectly sound, but public have unfairly

jumped to conclusion that you have instructed us to accept electoral college scheme, whereas you have merely commended it to our consideration. There is bitter Mahommedan opposition to it on basis of heads. Your new scheme would certainly give Hindus powers to elect Mahommedan representing Hindu views, and am convinced, cannot work satisfactorily. Possibly in future years some such scheme might be considered when we have more experience of results of election in India. For present we must safeguard communities.

Regarding native member he wrote that 'no adverse criticism at all here, either in Anglo-Indian papers or Calcutta Society.... There may be some small dislike of appointment as innovation to establish custom, but, if so, dislike so far is scarcely perceptible. Important that it should be made clear that we are not attempting to establish Native representation on any Council qua Native, but merely intend to remove race disability from persons fully qualified to hold appointment. This does not appear to be understood at home. Recognition of principle that race does not disqualify will, I believe, be welcomed by Mahommedans or Hindus alike.'

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1909.

34

LETTER FROM HON'BLE MIAN MOHAMMAD SHAFI TO DUNLOP SMITH
8 January 1909

The *Tribune* of Lahore reproduces a telegram said to have been received by the *Englishman* from its London correspondent to the effect that the Indian Viceroyalty had been offered to Mr. Winston Churchill. In common with other true lovers of Indian progress, and as one who entertains the highest admiration for His Excellency Lord Minto's statesmanship, strength of purpose, tact, strong sense of fairness and justice and complete grasp of the true political conditions prevailing in this country, I sincerely trust that these rumours of Lord Minto's early retirement are absolutely unfounded. It would be nothing short of disastrous for the country to be deprived of services of so wise a ruler at this most critical juncture—a ruler who has, through his clear-sighted policy, won the hearts of all those who are loyal to the British rule and are lovers of peaceful progress and particularly of my own community as well as of the landowning classes.

I have been wishing to write to you for some days, but owing to heavy

work at Amritsar and to my having been very busy since my return to Lahore, I have not been able to do so sooner. And even now I cannot find time to write in detail what I am very anxious you should know, *i. e.*, the opinion we, on this side of the country, entertain about Lord Morley's Despatch (the Reform Proposal). The various matters covered by this momentous document have now been more or less sufficiently discussed, in private gatherings and public meetings, by the party to which I belong and our views have been to a certain extent, clearly formulated...I propose in this letter to take up the question of reform of Municipal and District Boards.

Whenever dealing with important problems of this kind, I look at them from what may be called the Anglo-Mahommedan point of view. As you are aware, I am sincerely convinced that the interests of the Mahommedan community in India are absolutely identical with those of the British Government, and the Anglo-Indian community and in consequence, whenever any important change is proposed in the machinery of government or the enactment of any new law is contemplated, the first question I ask myself is : how will it affect the British rule in this country ? And in applying that test I cannot but bear in mind what we, who have greater opportunities of getting at the bottom of things than European gentlemen can possibly do, know about the ultimate aims of Swadeshi political movements (the then mainly Hindu boycotting of all British goods).

Now, the most important change which Lord Morley's scheme contemplates, as regards the constitution of Municipal and District Boards, is the removal of all 'official' participation in their ordinary administration, *i. e.*, the condition laid down in that scheme that the system of Government nomination of officials as Presidents of these bodies shall, in future be put a stop to....

Apart from the fact that the presence of the Deputy Commissioner or other official as President is necessary to keep order and to hold the balance even between the various contending elements in these bodies as well as to the purity and honesty of their administration mark the political effects of the contemplated reform :

(a) With the exception, perhaps, of the Punjab and Eastern Bengal, every one of these Boards throughout India will have a Hindu President and that, in all probability, a politician of the Congress school, Extremist or Moderate as the case may be. Even in the Punjab, in those towns where the system of mixed election prevails, he is bound to be either a Hindu Barrister or Pleader or a Hindu Money-lender. And even in the Municipal Boards, where a system of denominational representation prevails, as there can only be one President, and not two, chances are that he will, in the majority of cases, be a Hindu countryman of ours. Thus the Government will, by introducing this change, be handing over the administration of Municipal and District Board affairs to our Hindu friends and the first step in the dream of Swaraj (Independence) will have been achieved by these reformers.

(b) It is in these Municipal and District Boards that the Deputy

Commissioner or the Executive Head of a sub-division comes into direct contact with the representatives of the people. With the removal of this contact, part of his prestige will have vanished—and diminution of prestige is something very serious in a country like India.... It is the statesman's duty to look ahead, not only to judge of the immediate results but of the remote consequences as well particularly if stability of the British rule in India together with the real good of the country is, as it ought to be, the main end in view.

These changes will remove the Executive Officer at a distance, so to speak, from the people, will lessen his prestige, and in consequences the prestige of the Government itself will suffer. People will begin to learn to be independent of the official class in matters of local administration and this feeling of independence once engendered will be fostered by interested persons and will bear its ultimate fruit.

Source : Martin Gilbert, *Servant of India*.

35

LETTER FROM AMEER ALI TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES ON THE PROPOSED INDIAN REFORMS

There is evidently a misapprehension in some quarters regarding the attitude of the Muslim League (and of the Muslims generally) towards Lord Morley's scheme of Indian reforms, and attempts are being made to discount or discredit Muslim feelings and opinion.

The Muslims equally with other moderate sections of the population gratefully acknowledge with extension of political privileges. But they are bound to examine the details so that in the practical application of the scheme they may not be placed at a disadvantage. This, they believe, would not only be contrary to the intentions of Government, but probably prove fatal to the successful working of the reforms. In asking for modifications such as would properly and adequately safeguard their interests, they ask for no special privilege in derogation of the just rights of any other class or community; they demand nothing more than that their representation on the Councils and other representative bodies should under the projected reforms be real and not illusory, substantial and not nominal. They are anxious to work in harmony with all sections of the population, but they will not consent to be dragged at the wheels of a majority along any course it may choose to take. This, if I interpret rightly the feelings and opinions of my people, is the position they

have taken up.

During the whole course of my public life I have consistantly laboured to promote concord and good feeling among the two communities. I have always maintained cordial relations with leading Hindus. My remarks, therefore, will perhaps be accepted as free from bias of any kind.

In India the rank and file of the two communities are still widely divided in habits, customs and traditions of race and religion a more dominant factor than in European countries all of which tend to produce the feelings and thoughts which govern the actions of peoples. The Hindu is most anxious to preserve and extend the ascendancy he has gained, the Muslim aspires to obtain a share of the benefits promised to India by British rule. Under existing conditions and in the present state of feeling among the general body of the two nationalities a system of popular electorates recommended in the despatch of the Secretary of State would lead to constant friction, heart-burnings and complaints. In certain localities (and recent events fully justify the prediction) worse results may be apprehended.

That a joint electorate consisting of Hindus and Muslims under such conditions would not assure adequate representation to the Muslim community would be obvious to any unprejudiced mind. But the question has been clouded with so many fallacies that it becomes necessary to call attention to some of the salient features of the proposal against which Muslim opinion as unanimously ranged itself.

Under the proposed scheme (without going into details) the electoral machinery at every stage would be controlled by an overwhelming non-Muslim majority versed in modern political tactics. This explains the exultation with which it has been received and the tenacity with which the Muslim demand for communal representation is objected to. In electorates of the kind proposed every effort would be made to divide Muslim votes, and to return to the electoral colleges and the councils only such Muslims as would be acceptable to the majority. At this moment in some parts of the country Extremist views are predominant here, it is needless to say, no Muslim, unless he subscribed to these doctrines, would have the remotest chance of election. Not much exercise of imagination is required to understand the combinations by which a Muslim unacceptable to the majority may be defeated.

In considering the question of mixed electorates another fact must be borne in mind. The two communities often differ greatly in material circumstances. No Muslim is found following the vocation of *Sahukar*, *Mahajan*, or *Baniya*, in the legal and other professions his number can hardly be compared to that of Hindus. In state service the disparity is striking. Owing to the difference in the standard of living, rank to rank, generally speaking the Muslim is less affluent than the Hindu. Under these conditions the franchise qualification would have to be sensibly modified, otherwise the franchise limit would be so narrowed as to make Muslim representation practically of little value.

To allay Muslim apprehensions Lord MacDonnell states in *The Times* of 6 January that Morley's scheme aims at securing to the Muslims a proportionate *minimum* representation; and that it does not preclude the electors or the majority of them from foregoing the advantage they possess, and giving to the minority a particular election a larger representation that the *minimum* to which under the scheme they are entitled. So that, according to him, if one Muslim obtained the entire Muslim votes, and another a larger number of Hindu votes, the result would be that Muslim instead of one would have the good fortune of possessing two representatives. With some experience in the interpretation of documents, I venture to say that the language of the despatch furnishes no warrant for Lord MacDonnell's construction. The intention may be there, it is not only not expressed, but also the context rebuts it.

Assuming, however, that Lord MacDonnell's interpretation is correct, it would be considered a very mixed blessing. A Muslim brought in wholly or partly by Hindu votes would be pledged wholly or partly to the view of his political supporters; he would be used as a counterpoise to his Muslim colleague, and, to use a colloquialism, would often be putting a spoke in his wheel. Illustrations of how this may be done are not wanting in the House of Commons. A nominee of the majority posing as a Muslim representative would often do more harm to Muslim interests than if they were wholly unrepresented.

The principle of proportional representation possesses, no doubt, the recommendation of simplicity as furnishing an easy solution to an unprecedentedly difficult problem. But its simplicity should not, it is submitted, lead us to overlook the prejudice it would cause to the Mahommedans. There is no question the Hindu population largely exceeds the Mahommedans in number; but the real figure in the first case is swelled to its stated dimensions by the inclusion of masses of people whose very touch the real Hindu regards as defilement, with whom he would hold no social converse, and who are called, or call themselves, Hindus for census purposes alone. Communities like those of the *Chandals*, *Chamars*, *Musahirs*, *Bhangis*, etc. names familiar enough to the Indian administrator—can never hope to rise in the social scale, or to sit in the same assembly as the caste-people, the real Hindus. They will in all probability never hear of Lord Morley's scheme or take the faintest interest in its working. The Mahommedans number according to official figures, over 53 millions. They are unequally distributed over the whole country, and vary in material and social conditions, not only in the different provinces, but in different parts of the same province. The only province in which there is any approximation in the circumstances of the two great communities is the Punjab. Here, the followers of Islam, like the Hindus, are found in all strata of society. Here, therefore, it may be possible to apply the principle of proportional representation without prejudice to the interests of either. But in the other provinces the conditions are totally

different. For example, in the United Provinces, the upper and middle classes of Mahommedans are mostly office-holders, scholars, professional men, and what in French would be called rentiers of different degrees—descendants generally of men who occupied good positions under the former rule. The social importance of the Mahommedans in the life of the province, as has been admitted by successive governors, can hardly be gauged by their numerical proportion. Proportional representation applied to the United Provinces would work enormous injustice to Mahommedan representation, and would create a feeling of resentment of which indications are already forthcoming. The same remarks apply to other provinces.

If Mahommedan representation is to have any real meaning, it must be, as the Mahommedans urge adequate and substantial. If the Muslim representations are to be of any practical use to their people or to the State, representative bodies must be such as to give non-official majorities to the provincial councils and the further extension in their powers and privileges. The importance of a nation cannot always be adjudged on numerical considerations. Whatever may be the view regarding the historical and political position of the Mahommedans to which the Government of India attaches some value, Mahommedan loyalty is an asset to the Empire which I venture to submit ought not to be lightly put aside.

Source : The Times, 14 January 1909.

36

LETTERS FROM MIAN MOHAMMAD SHAFI TO DUNLOP SMITH

I

10 January 1909

I have received your acknowledgement of my congratulatory telegram. I had expected to hear of a four-letter title being conferred on you, and hope that these three letters are the first step towards it.

I suppose you have seen the press reports of the proceedings of the All-India Muslim League meetings held at Amritsar.... The speakers were all enthusiastically unanimous in expressing their sincere gratitude to Lord Minto, and also expressed their thankfulness to Lord Morley for having recognized the right of the Mahommedan community to separate representation on the Councils. But as regards the method of election laid down by Lord Morley

and some other features of his scheme, detrimental to Mahommedan interests, several speakers insisted that His Lordship was not entitled to our thanks unless parts of his scheme were materially modified.

To turn now to the constitution of the Provincial Councils as proposed in Lord Morley's Despatch. Here again, looking at the question from what I called in my previous letter as the Anglo-Mahommedan point of view, I deprecate some of the radical changes proposed by His Lordship. The scheme as laid down by him has been practically hailed with delight by the professional politician of the Congress school. Why ? Not only because it constitutes a distinct step in advance, from his point of view, but also because it carries with it certain germs which will soon result in the disease assuming another shape – it lays the foundation for creation of discontent and for future agitation. In making these remarks I have in my mind what Lord Morley had laid down in paragraph 18 of his Despatch, *i.e.*, that, in the Provincial Councils, official majority may be dispensed with. Now, in the first place, the circumstances existing in the various Indian Provinces being quite different from the other, call for different treatment, and to prescribe the same rule or set of rules for all Provinces, irrespective of local conditions, seems to me to be a highly unstatesmanlike act. The proposals of the Government of India were the result of a right conception of local circumstances and were framed in view of the divergence in the needs and requirements of the various Provinces.

Mark the results of dispensing with the official majorities in the Provincial Councils. Election of members from various communities in proportion to their numerical strength seems to be the rule laid down by Lord Morley (see paragraph 12 of his Despatch), and the last words of paragraph 13 indicate that appointment of members to these Councils by nomination, being a 'dubious method', is to be given up. (It is very strange indeed that Lord Morley would fill up the deficiency in the number of electors representing minorities by nomination, a thing unheard of and not based on any principle whatsoever, but would not adopt that procedure in making up the deficiency in the number of members on these Councils, a system perfectly justifiable under certain circumstances.) What will be the necessary result ? In Madras, Bombay, Western Bengal and United Provinces the members will mostly belong to the majority, the minorities being represented by a small number only. In the Punjab and Eastern Bengal the non-official members will be equally divided amongst the two communities. But the method of election laid down by Lord Morley (*i.e.*, each member having one vote—but all voting promiscuously, Hindus and Mahommedans together) will result in the non-official majorities being very peculiarly constituted. In all Provinces, except Eastern Bengal and Punjab, these gentlemen will either be Hindu politicians or their mandatories. And I am doubtful if even in these two Provinces the state of things will be quite satisfactory. That the majorities so constituted can do an immense amount of harm, and that the work of these

Councils will not by any means be expedited or always conducted on desirable lines—are very obvious facts.

This state of things is not calculated to enhance the prestige of Government in the eyes of the Indian public. Every check that the Government may receive will create a thrill of delight in certain circles; every Government measure defeated, or nearly defeated, will embolden those whose dreams lie in a certain direction. And supposing a Government measure defeated in a Provincial Council is enacted in the Imperial Council, or a Private Bill carried out in the Provincial council is vetoed by the Lieutenant-Governor (as suggested by Lord Morley in paragraph 20), what will be the consequences ? A state of things that the soul of the agitator delights in bringing about. Meetings will be held in the country to protest against such action of the Government; a certain class of men will proclaim from the house-tops that the Government is acting unconstitutionally in not listening to the voice of the people as spoken through their representatives; loud denunciations of arbitrary action of an autocratic Government will be heard on all sides; and there will be a fresh outbreak of discontent and sedition. These reforms, therefore, satisfy the agitators in two ways, *i.e.*, present gain, and foundation laid down for future discontent likely to give rise to fresh demands and fresh agitation. I am sorry, therefore, in the interests of the Government as well as of peaceful progress in the country, that Lord Morley should have laid down this dangerous principle.

II

13 January 1909

Will these Electoral Colleges themselves be really representative of the various classes and interests which His Lordship concedes ought to be adequately represented on these bodies ? Lord Morley agrees with His Excellency the Viceroy that the principle is to be borne in mind that election by the wishes of the people concerned is the ultimate object to be secured, whatever may be the actual machinery adopted for giving effect to it (see paragraph 8 of his Despatch). Does the machinery which he proposes for adoption secure this ultimate object ?

Now Lord Morley recognizes that 'the Legislative Councils should reflect the leading elements of the population at large and that no system of representation would be satisfactory if it did not provide for the presence in the Councils of sufficient representatives of communities so important as are the Mahommedans and the landed classes.' And how could he do otherwise then recognize this the most obvious fact in the complicated political conditions prevailing in this country ? Whatever the other certain or uncertain elements in the complex situation in India, the Mahommedan community and the landed classes are the two most definite and certain elements of the

Indian populations. While the Mahommedans, I claim, constitute the really and truly loyal section of this vast population, the landed classes form the backbone of the country. It is obvious, therefore, that any system of representation, electoral or otherwise, which is not likely to result in the presence in these councils of a sufficient number of the representatives of these two classes will not only utterly fail to comply with the true requirements of the country as well as with the main principle laid down by Lord Morley, but will in itself constitute a political danger of the utmost gravity.

Let us now examine whether the scheme sketched out by the Secretary of State in paragraph 12 of his Despatch fulfils the above conditions and is calculated to achieve the real end in view. Instead of giving these, the two most important interests, separate representation on these Councils, Lord Morley proposes to provide for their representation on the Electoral Colleges by means of promiscuous election, deficiencies in their numbers being made up by nomination. And in the example which he gives, he fixes the number of Mahommedan members of the Electoral College in proportion merely to their proportion in the population, and for general purposes he divides the population into two main sections—Hindus and Mahommedans.

Now the Indian Mussulmans claim that they are entitled to representation on these Councils not merely in proportion to their numbers, but that the true measure of representation which they ought, in justice, to possess should be based on their numerical strength and political importance. This claim was enunciated by the community in the address presented by the All India Mahommedan Deputation to His Excellency the Viceroy in October 1906, and was fully recognized by him as just and warranted by the local circumstances, the prevailing political conditions and past history. The result of conceding to the Indian Mussulmans representation on the basis of their numbers alone will work most injuriously and will be disastrous for them in the majority of Indian Provinces. Nay, I go so far as to assert that the state of things resulting from the carrying into effect of this principle will, in the end, prove a political danger. The community, therefore, is justified in expressing its dissatisfaction in this respect and, from what I know of my own people, I am afraid the dissatisfaction is general as well as real.

From what I have said above, it is clear that the Indian Mussulmans regard the measure of representation conceded to them as insufficient. But is the system of election proposed in the paragraph under discussion calculated to bring into the Electoral Colleges in the first instance, and into the provincial Councils in the next, real representatives of the Mahommedan community as well as of the landed classes ? I say emphatically no, no, and again no ! The promiscuous system of election proposed in this paragraph cannot but result in the electoral as well as the councillors elected being the members of the majority and their mandatories. Merely fixing the relative

proportion of the Hindu and Mahommedan members of these Electoral Colleges and of the members of the Councils to be elected by them cannot possibly result in the election of real representative of the communities at all. The majority will, by a mere shuffling of the cards, so to speak, be able to send in their own nominees to these Electoral Colleges—Mahommedans in name, but in no sense representatives of their own community—and subsequently to the Provincial Councils. This is so utterly obvious to anyone who is acquainted with the real local conditions that it hardly needs any demonstration.

While Lord Morley has recognized in theory the true principles of representation, he has, when carrying out those principles into practice, turned out a scheme which reduces the cardinal principles to a dead letter. From what we know has been going on in London, we see a shrewd, clever and wily mind at work here and the practical phases of this scheme are the result of its machinations.

And what about the landed classes ? Will they, in practice, secure any representation at all ? Those who are aware of the real state of things existing in this country know how real is the influence exercised by the leading lawyers and members of the money-lending class over landowners. Assuming that the electorates specified in this paragraph for election of members of the Electoral Colleges do return the fixed number of men from amongst their own class (which is not expressly laid down by Lord Morley), the members of the Electoral College other than landowners will, in part, naturally be influential lawyers and bankers. Under these circumstances, I feel certain that hardly any landowner will ultimately get into the Provincial Councils if this curious scheme of election is to stand.

The real solution of the problem is a purely denominational system of election, from the lowest rung of the ladder to its top, and a separate measure of representation to landowners, as such. Unless this is done, the Provincial Councils will not be truly representative of the principal classes and interests, will not be exponents of real public opinion, and will consist mainly of politicians of one class and their mandatories—mere puppets playing into the hands of the former. And the results will neither be conducive to the smooth working of the administrative machinery, nor will the task of the Provincial Governments be made lighter or easier. The prestige and influence of this particular class of politicians will increase, the circle over which they exercise influence will go on steadily widening, and there will ultimately be a corresponding decrease in the prestige which Government possesses in the eyes of the general public. Given one or two checks received by Provincial Governments, the impression created in the minds of the public will be extremely undesirable. The relinquishment of the principle of official majority in these Councils, the dispensing with the system of nomination and the scheme of election of members, as laid down by Lord Morley in the Paragraph 12, will bring about a state of things far-reaching in its results most detrimental, not

only to the interests of the minority, but, to my mind, to the prestige and stability of the British Rule itself.

I had thought it my duty to give the above warning, as I regard it incumbent on all truly loyal subjects of the British Crown (and particularly on followers of the Anglo-Mahommedan school of politics) to warn the Government in time whenever a serious danger of this kind looms large in the distance.

Source : Martin Gilbert, *Servant of India.*

37

LETTER FROM SYED HUSSAIN BILGRAMI TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES ON SEPARATE ELECTORATE

...The Mahommedans of India as a whole, and as represented by the All-India Muslim League, are firmly decided in favour of communal representation as the only way of securing to them their full electorate rights. This demand involves no absurdity and it has never been shown to be impracticable. Personally I consider it far more workable the practice than the scheme of electoral colleges, about which I have serious doubts.

Source : The Times, 12 January 1909.

38

TELEGRAM FROM MINTO TO MORLEY
15 January 1909

All-India Muslim League was considering sending deputations to England to you, and also deputation to him 'I propose discouraging former as unnecessary and refusing latter as my reception of it would certainly provoke deputations from other interests and would create useless discussion. I am convinced scheme is unworkable, and if belief continues that it is practically already accepted, much harm will be done. I think best line for you to take would be simply to say that electoral college was merely suggestion as to which Government of India are consulting local feeling and that no proposal will receive approval which does not provide with certainty for recognition

of Mahommedan community.

'I have no doubt Local Government will report unanimously against the scheme. Clarke, as to whose views I had doubt, has written to me already opposing it.... I had conversation with Gokhale today. He says that personally he does not think it would be unfair to Mahommedans. He naturally expresses this view from his political standpoint but at the same time he is very decidedly against introducing scheme if I apprehend serious Mahommedan opposition.'

Source : Minto Papers : Telegraphic Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1909.

39

LETTER FROM MIAN MOHAMMAD SHAFI TO DUNLOP SMITH
18 January 1909

The telegram published in this evening's papers that Lord Morley had an interview with his Majesty the King-Emperor in which the question of protection of Mahommedan interests was discussed and that the matter will again be discussed in the Secretary of State's Council, will have sent a thrill of gratitude to His Majesty in the hearts of millions of Indian Mussulmans. The news will not only reach the educated Mahommedans, but, through them, will spread throughout the Mahommedan community. We are truly grateful to His Most Gracious Majesty for the interest he is apparently taking in the welfare of his loyal Mahommedan subjects and to His Excellency the Viceroy for his protection of our rights. I assure you that all this will bind the Mahommedan community still closer to the British Rule with the silken chains of sincere gratitude and loyalty, and will strengthen the Anglo-Mahommedan bound of union a hundred-fold.

Proceeding with the discussion of the Reform Scheme from where I left it in my last letter :

In dividing the Indian population into Hindus and Mahommedans and fixing the proportion between the representatives of the two communities on the basis of that division, there is one thing which is often lost sight of. This broad division for census purposes ignores the fact that the so-called Hindu section of the population does not consist entirely of Hindus, strictly so called. This vast, heterogeneous mass consists, besides those who are in truth Hindus, of Sweepers, Chamars, Gonds, Bhils, Jains &c., &c., who do not follow the Hindu religion and whose customs and social codes are entirely different from those of the Hindus. Nor are these tribes, from a practical point of view, worth counting when weighing the political

importance of the various communities inhabiting India. Eliminating these from calculation, it is obvious that the proportion between the Mahommedan and the Hindu communities is not what it is represented to be by the opposite party.

The scheme proposed by the Government of India for the Viceroy's Legislative Council is pre-eminently satisfactory. A careful study of the composition of the Council as laid down in Lord Minto's Despatch to the Secretary of State reveals a thorough grasp of local conditions and requirements and a careful balancing of the various claims on the part of the Government of India. While maintaining the supremacy of the Government by means of a sufficient official majority it provides for the representation of all important communities and interests. It combines the two systems of election and nomination in a manner best suited to the varying conditions of different classes of the vast Indian population and of the various Indian Provinces. Indeed the Government of India's Despatch is altogether a most remarkable document, and the scheme of reform which it embodies is a rare act of statesmenship, not only satisfying the existing needs of the country respecting this momentous problem, but keeping in view those future contingencies and possibilities which true statesmanship can never ignore when devising a scheme of constitutional reform.

And I am glad to notice that Lord Morley has not adopted the same attitude of mind as regards this important question as he has done in the case of the Provincial Councils. It is indeed most satisfactory to find that he has been 'able to accept' the proposals of the Government of India in relation to the Imperial Legislative Council 'practically in their entirety' (paragraph 22).

The maintenance of an absolute official majority, so absolutely essential to the stability of the British rule in this country, and exercise of power of nomination, so necessary under the existing circumstances, are acknowledged by Lord Morley as altogether indispensable....

As regards the appointment of an Indian Member on the Executive Council of the Viceroy and on those of the Governors of Bombay and Madras, my opinion is that this will constitute a most dangerous innovation. The step is one which, to my mind, is a most serious one and cannot safely be taken for some time to come. But should the Government introduce this change, I would strongly advise the appointment of two Members—a Hindu and a Mahommedan—as Councillors, without being placed at the head of any particular Departments.

Before concluding I would like to mention that the existing circumstances in the Punjab do not justify the wholesale introduction of the elective system. The Legislative Council of this Province is comparatively young, so to speak, and considering that political institutions in the Punjab are in their infancy, to throw open all non-official seats to election would be a grave mistake. Personally I am of opinion that, for some years, non-official seats on our

Council should be filled up by nomination. But if election must be introduced in this Province as well, I would have at least two-third of the non-official Members nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor.

In conclusion, may I request you to convey to His Excellency Lord Minto my most sincere thanks—and if I may claim to speak on behalf of my co-religionists, those of the entire Mahommedan community—for the generous and noble support His Lordship is extending to our backward—but sincerely loyal—community in their struggle for self-preservation and self-defence against an aggressive majority. I think I can assure him that he has won, not only the sincere gratitude, but deep affection of the entire Muslim community in India.

Source : Martin Gilbert, *Servant of India.*

40

LETTER FROM MORLEY TO MINTO

21 January 1909

I have agreed to receive the sons of the crescent next week. I wish the Prophet himself were coming ! There are not many historic figures whom I should be better pleased to summon up from Paradise, or wherever he now abides. Your language to the Islamites about their, 'Just claim to something more than numerical strength' was perhaps a trifle less guarded than it might have been if you will allow me to say so. But I hope to execute my sword dance without cutting either my own toes or yours.

Source : Minto Papers : Letters from the Secretary of State for India, 1909.

41

DEPUTATION OF THE LONDON MUSLIM LEAGUE TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA ON THE PROPOSED REFORM

27 January 1909

We are extremely obliged to your Lordship for granting us the opportunity to place before you the views of the Moslems of India on the question of the important reforms, which under your Lordship's auspices, are to be introduced in India. We come, not only on behalf of the League in London, but also in India, for we have been authorised to represent their case before

your Lordship. They deemed it advisable to send delegates over to cooperate with us in this matter, but, considering the difficulty and the delay it involved, they decided at present to leave representation of their case in our hands. We are conscious of their responsibility that has been imposed on us, and we only hope, my Lord, that we shall be able to do our duty satisfactorily to our people, and also to be of some assistance to your Lordship. Before proceeding to state our views on specific points, I shall ask permission to make one or two preliminary remarks. We welcome most cordially, most heartily, the extension of political privileges to His Majesty's Indian subjects. But to make the projected reforms a real success our cooperation with the servants of the Crown and our fellow-subjects is as much needed as it is in all matters concerning the progress and welfare of the country. My Lord, whilst we welcome these reforms, we welcome them in the conviction that, in their practical application, our status and interests will be kept in view. We do not wish, and cannot consent, to be placed in a disadvantageous position. We are anxious that whatever boons are conferred on, whatever political concessions are made to the people of India, we should have our legitimate share in those concessions. We ask for nothing in derogation of the just rights of any other people. We seek no special privileges: we want only our legitimate share in political rights and political privileges, and nothing more. If, in the language of the Royal Message to the princes and peoples of India, new avenues are opened out for the participation of educated Indians in the government of the country, our people wish that their share should be kept in view. If new elements are to be introduced into any of the great Departments of State, we expect in fairness and justice, that they should be equally balanced; and if any important departure is made in administrative policy, we want that the interests of the two great communities in India should be so coordinated that neither the one nor the other should be in a position to say its interests were sacrificed or subordinated to the interests of the other. That is the position we take up. The foundation of British rule in India rests upon the conviction among the people that equal justice is the chief policy of the British Government in its dealings with the varied races of that Continent. Speaking with the full consciousness of the responsibility imposed upon me, I say it would be an evil day for India if any class or any community comes to think that the interests of one community are in any way subordinated to the interests of the other. It has been said that the Mahommedans form a minority among the population of India. There, they do not equal in numbers the other great community which inhabits India, but they are seventy million souls, fifty-three of whom are under British rule. They have common ideals, and by traditions of race and religion form a nationality apart from all other people in India. To call them a minority is a misapplication of the term, and to regard them in that light would be an injustice to the Mussulman people. We form a nationality as important as any other, and our wishes, sentiments and interests should, we conceive form as important factors in the consideration of policy and

measures as those of any other. If the vast masses of low-caste people who are nominally Hindus were excluded from the Hindu figures, certainly the disparity which now appears between the Hindus and Mahommedan populations would not strike as so great or so disproportionate. These tribes and communities, nominally Hindu for the purposes of census, have nothing in common with the real Hindu, to whom their touch, often their very shadow, is pollution. They can never rise out of the degraded state in which they live and have lived for centuries. Save the British Official, they have no representative or protector. Some of them have made desperate efforts to break the shackles that have bound them for ages, but they have been thrust back to their thraldom by, among other things, the judicial recognition of ancient usages. In the great reforms about to be introduced they will have no lot or place, nor are your Lordship's benevolent intentions ever likely to reach their ears. They have remained, and will remain for many decades, may be centuries, the degraded castes of India. But it would be disastrous if by placing all power and influence in the hands of privileged classes their emancipation should be made difficult in the future. To include these communities, however, in the Hindu population, and then to compare it with the Mahommedan population, does not appear to us just.

I now come on to the specific points which we wish to place before your Lordship for consideration. The first is the question of joint electorates. We feel that to confide the election of our representatives to joint electorates would be most detrimental to the Mussulman people. Your lordship is aware of the sharp cleavage that has taken place recently between the political conceptions of the Mahommedan people and some section of the other communities. You are also aware of the other divergencies which exist between the Mahommedans and the non-Moslem people in India, divergencies which ramify in all directions. It might perhaps startle people in England if they were told of the trifling incidents which often inflame passions on both sides. I do not wish to dwell particularly on the character of these incidents. I only refer to them to show the gulf which still separates the rank and file and of the two communities, and which the administrator must always keep in view and the statesman take into consideration, when dealing with general questions affecting both the races. Having these divergencies in view and the cleavage which has recently taken place the Mussulmans of India consider it extremely important that their representation should not be dependant on the goodwill of any other people. The important deputation that waited upon the Viceroy in 1906 emphatically urged upon His Excellency that the separate representation of the Mahommedans should begin from the lowest rung of the ladder and go up to the highest, namely, the Viceregal Council. In that way along will they get any benefit from the concessions which are so generously going to inaugurate in India. It is admitted that Mahommedan representation has been most meagre under the present system on rural and district boards and municipal corporations. They serve as practical illustrations of what will happen

if the system of joint electorates for the Councils (is) introduced. The Government of India has admitted that Mahommedan representation has been most unsatisfactory so far, and for that reason proposes a supplemental addition of Mahommedan members elected by Mahommedans. If it be admitted that the nominees of another body, not altogether in agreement with Mahommedan opinions, cannot really or effectively represent Mahommedan wishes and feelings, in that case the matter does not require further discussion.

We say further, that the principle of proportional representation would be fatal to our interests. The Government of India recognises, if I am not mistaken, the difficulty of meeting the requirements of the Mussulman people, if its representation is to be based on a consideration of numbers. Whatever may be the value of the system of proportional representation in countries where the people are in the main homogeneous, we submit it is wholly unsuited to India. Save and except in the Punjab, where the Mussulmans preponderate in numbers, there is hardly any approximation between the two races. The Mahommedans say, if proportional representation happens to be introduced into India their representation would be completely swamped. In answer to this, it is said the Government can hardly take into consideration the political and historical importance of any community in judging of the question of representation, and the Mahommedan position is compared to that of the Sikhs and the Parsees. We submit respectfully, but emphatically, that the position of the Mussulman people has no analogy to that of the minor communities of India. Neither in importance nor in numbers are they in any way analogous to them. We share the burden of defending the empire to the same extent as our fellow countrymen, and we probably supply to the Indian Army a larger number of soldiers than most others. It is easy to say, if representation is to be conceded to Mahommedans on considerations of political and historical importance, the Sikhs should also be taken into account. That is a false analogy. In the first place, the Sikhs are accounted as Hindus, and in the second place, they number not more than two million souls. The Mahommedans stand on a totally different footing, and we submit that their position should be considered on a totally different basis. That other element besides mere numbers must enter into consideration in determining the number of representatives from each community is clear from the case of Eastern Bengal. Here the Mahommedans are in overwhelming majority. Supposing they were to ask the Mahommedan representation should be preponderant, they would be met with the answer; look at the pleaders and lawyers, spread all over the country, who dominate the counsels of Government, they are Hindus, and come from Eastern Bengal; look at the merchants, traders landlords, who have taken the place of the Mahommedan zemindars and see how important they are. And the relative positions of the two communities would justly be taken into account in fixing their representation. If that argument is good for one people in Eastern Bengal, it applies with equal force in the United Provinces, the Mahommedans

are 14 per cent of the population, whilst the Hindus are said to be 86 per cent, although if the degraded castes were eliminated from these figures the disparity would not be so great. Considering the admitted importance of the Mahommedans in the social economy of the province, they ought to have far greater representation than is proposed to be conceded to them. We say, therefore, that the principle of proportional representation is not applicable to India and, if introduced, would be most prejudical to the interests of the Mahommedan community. We submit that the ratio of representation should be left to the executive authority, to be determined upon considerations of Imperial policy and local conditions and circumstances. Our representation, we beg to urge, should be not only adequate, but substantial in order to give us an effective voice in the deliberations of the various assemblies. Having in view the fact under these reforms the privileges of the non-official members will be considerably extended, it is extremely important that our community should be represented in sufficient numbers to be able to exercise some weight, some influence on the Councils. My people will not be content with any representation which is less than adequate and substantial. On general questions racial and religious differences will probably not enter into competition, but contingencies are certain to arise in which the interests or the views of the two communities do not coincide. On these occasions it would be necessary to take into account the balance of parties. We submit that in the constitution of the Councils it should be the aim of His Majesty's Government, and of the Government of India, to have them so balanced that not only the administrative machinery should run smoothly, but also that no party should be able to outvote the just claims of a less powerful party. We therefore, submit as a standard of adequate representation that the number of Mahommedan members on the several Councils should be so fixed that if the Mahommedans were to join a certain number of what may be called non-partisan members, or to receive their support on any particular question, the issue may be decided accordingly. Unless some standard of that kind is adopted, and our position sufficiently assured on the reformed Councils, our representation will be anomalous, and our representative will exercise little influence or weight. One other matter we wish to lay before your Lordship which is embodied in paragraph 21 of our Representation : 'The Committee further submit that as in the opinion of His Majesty's Government the time has arrived for the introduction of the Indian element into the Executive Councils, in the interests of the Empire, both the great communities should be represented. They consider that the introduction of a member from one community only will be regarded as seriously prejudicing the rights and interests of the other.' Our people believe, my Lord, that representatives from both communities as advisers to the Government of India—whatever may be the designation given to them—would be of great assistance in the administration of that country. But they consider it would give rise to serious

difficulties if one community was represented and the other left out. We thank your Lordship for the patience with which you have listened to me. I know that the task you have undertaken is one of the most stupendous character which any Minister of the crown in your position has undertaken, but our people feel sure that at this stage, which we consider to be the turning point in our national existence, the balance will be maintained fairly and equitably, and our interests will not be subordinated to that of any other community.[1]

The following memorial was submitted.

'Whilst offering their loyal and cordial support to the general and animating principles of the Scheme, the Committee feel bound to state that some of the proposals are viewed with serious apprehension and misgiving by their people as likely to prove detrimental to Muslim interests. They, therefore, beg to place before his Lordship as explicitly and clearly as possible the Muslim case....

'The claim of the Muslim community to adequate representation on the Imperial and Provincial Councils, commensurate with its numbers and political and historic importance, has been admitted and urged with considerable force by the Government of India in its circular letter dated 24th August 1907, and its letter to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State, dated the 1st October 1908.

'In its circular letter referred to above, the Government of India further pointed out that under the system of election hitherto in force, Hindus largely predominate in all or almost all the electorates with this result that comparatively few Muslim members have been elected. These have been supplemented by nominations made by the Government. But the total representation thus effected has not been commensurate with the weight to which the Muslim community is entitled; and it has, moreover, been strongly urged that even the system of nomination has frequently failed to secure the appointment of Muslims of the class by whom the community desires to be represented.

'In his despatch of the 27th November 1908, paragraph 9, his Lordship gives emphatic expression to his agreement with the opinion of the Government of India that the Muslims should be adequately represented on the enlarged Councils, His Lordship says: I agree also that the Legislative Councils should reflect the leading elements of the population at large, and that no system of representation would be satisfactory, if it did not provide for the presence in the Councils of sufficient representatives of communities so important as are the Muslims and the landed classes.

'The Committee beg respectfully to state that the entire Muslim people view his Lordship's suggestions with grave misgiving as calculated to subject Muslim representation to the good will of a rival community—and place Muslim interests in their hands.

'In common with other well-wishers of India the Committee look

[1] K. K, Aziz, *Ameer Ali—His Life and Work*, Publishers United Ltd., Lahore, 1968.

forward to a time when the development of a true spirit of compromise or the fusion of the races may make the principles indicated by his Lordship capable of practical application without sacrificing the interests of any of the nationalities or giving political ascendancy to one to the disadvantage of the others. But the Committee venture to think that, however ready the country may be for constitutional reforms, the interests of the two great communities of India must be considered and dealt with separately as is indeed admitted in theory by his Lordship.

'In order that Muslim representation may be real and not merely nominal or illusory, it is essential that the Muslim representatives should voice their feelings and sentiments and advocate the policy which commends itself to the best minds of their own community. Under the system of an electoral college consisting of say 75 Hindus and 25 Muslims, the Muslim who would be elected would be a mere nominee of the majority.

'Moreover, in places where the influence of the Mahajan & legal classes is preponderant it would, in any circumstances, be used in favour of Muslim candidates whose views are not acceptable to the general body of their people; the mischief would be intolerably aggravated in the case of joint electorates.

'The Committee have noticed a statement that Muslim apprehensions in respect of joint electoral colleges are unfounded in as much as if one Muslim was returned by the collective votes of the Muslim electors, and another was returned by a larger number of votes from the majority, the result would be that there would be two Muslim representatives instead of one. Whatever may have been the intention, the Committee find no warrant for this contention in the wording of his Lordship's Despatch. Judging from the context they conceive the only effect of the Muslim having a large number of votes either entirely composed of Hindu votes or partly Hindu and partly Muslim votes would be to put out of the field the candidate who relied on Muslim votes alone.

'Assuming, however, that the view suggested is correct it implies a serious danger to the Muslim people. A nominee of the majority professing to represent the Muslim community but out of harmony with their general sentiments and opinions would be the cause of constant friction and the advantages anticipated from the Electoral Colleges will be more than counter-balanced by the complaints and heartburnings that are certain to result therefrom.

'The Committee believe that if just and equitable considerations were to demand the grant to their community of a double vote, His Majesty's Government would not be deterred from that course by the apprehended resentment of other interested classes of the population. Save as regards University representation in which both communities have the privilege of double voting, the Muslim subjects of His Majesty, so long as they can obtain adequate and substantial communal representation on the Councils,

the Rural and District Boards and Corporations, with the right of electing their own representatives, do not ask for double votes. Muslim representation on such basis is more likely to lead to concord between the two communities and harmonious working on representative bodies, than if it were merely nominal, for the majority would in such a case be more inclined to conciliate and regard Muslim opinion than when in a position to override it.

'The Committee, on behalf of the Muslims of India, wish to disclaim all idea of racial prejudice or any desire to seek special privileges. They wish to affirm their anxiety to work in cordial co-operation and harmony with all loyal classes of His Majesty's subjects in the promotion of the general interest of the country. But they cannot ignore the divergencies which still divide the races of India, and which they believe time and general progress under a sympathetic and enligtened rule can alone remove.

'The Political and Historical position of the Muslim community has been spoken of recently in some what slighting terms. With reference to that the Committee desire to offer no remarks. But they beg humbly to observe that the loyalty of the Muslim people is an asset to the Empire and merits some consideration. The Muslim population numbering 53 millions can hardly be dealt with as a minority, or have their status regarded as analogous to that of the minor communities of India. Though living inter-mixed with the non-Muslims they form a distinct nationality divided by traditions of race, religion and ideals. However much their presence may be deprecated by some of their neighbours, they are important factors to be reckoned with in the administration of the country.

'The principle of proportional representation, whatever its value to Western Europe where the people are in the main, homogeneous and animated by common ideals and sentiments, is unsuited, the Committee respectfully submit, to a country where the rank and file are still so sharply divided. What is part of the religion of one people is abhorred by the other, whilst in places, the touch of an outsider, if not his very shadow, amounts to pollution.

'The Committee beg to affirm most emphatically that their people ask for nothing in derogation of the just rights of any other class or community; they seek simply to obtain a fair and just recognition of their legitimate claims that they may in future occupy a position in the Councils of Government consistent with their numbers and political status. Whilst anxious to work in a spirit of compromise, and in concord, harmony and in co-ordination with the Hindu community, they are not disposed to place themselves in subordination to any class or people in India, or to consent to follow any policy that may be dictated by the majority.'

Source **: *Memoirs and Other Writings of Syed Ameer Ali*, edited by Syed Razi Wasti, People's Publishing House, Lahore, 1968.**

42

MORLEY'S REPLY TO THE DEPUTATION OF THE LONDON BRANCH OF THE ALL-INDIAN MOSLEM LEAGUE WAITED UPON THE SECRETARY OF STATE

I am delighted to meet you to-day, because I have always felt in my political experience, now pretty long, that it is when face answers to face that you come best to points of controversial issue. I have listened to the able speech of my friend Mr. Ameer Ali and to the speech that followed, with close attention, not merely for the sake of the arguments upon the special points raised, but because the underlying feeling and the animating spirit of the two speeches are full of encouragement. Why ? Because instead of any hostile attitude to our reforms as a whole, I find that you welcome them cordially and with gratitude. I cannot say with what satisfaction I receive that announcement. If you will allow me, I will, before I come to the special points, say a few words upon the general position.

It is only five weeks, I think, since our scheme was launched, and I am bound to say that at the end of those five weeks the position may fairly be described as hopeful and promising. I do not think that the millennium will come in five more weeks, nor in fifty weeks; but I do say that for a scheme of so wide a scope to be received as this scheme has been received, is a highly encouraging sign. It does not follow that because we have launched our ship with a slant of fair wind, this means the same thing as getting into harbour. There are plenty of difficult points that we have got to settle. But when I try from my conning-tower in this office, to read the signs in the political skies, I am full of confidence. The great thing is that in every party both in India and at home in every party, and every section, and every group—there is a recognition of the magnitude and the gravity of the enterprise on which we have embarked. I studied very closely the proceedings at Madras, and the proceedings at Amritsar, and in able speeches made in both those places I find a truly political spirit in the right sense of the word—in the sense of perspective and proportion—which I sometimes wish could be imitated by some of my political friends nearer home. I mean that issues, important enough but upon which there is some difference, are put aside—for the time only, if you like, but still put aside—in face of the magnitude of the issues that we present to you in these reforms. On Monday, in *The Times* newspaper, there was a long and most interesting communication from Bombay, written, I believe, by a gentleman of very wide Indian knowledge and level-headed humour. What does he say ? He takes account of the general position as he found it in India shortly after my Despatch arrived. 'I might have dwelt,' he says, 'upon the fact that I have not met a single official who does not admit that some changes which should gratify Indian longings were

necessary, and I might have expatiated upon the abounding evidence that Lord Morley's despatch and speech have unquestionably eased a tension which had become exceedingly alarming.' That is a most important thing, and I believe Parliament has fully recognised it.

We cannot fold our arms and say that things are to go on as they did before, and I rejoice to see what this gentleman says. He is talking of officials, and I always felt from the beginning that if we did not succeed in carrying with us the goodwill of that powerful service, there would be reason for suspecting that we were wrong upon the merits, and even if we were not wrong on the merits, there would be reason for apprehending formidable difficulties. I have myself complete confidence in them. I see in some journals of my own party suspicions thrown upon the loyalty of that service to his Majesty's Government of the day. It is absurd to think anything of the kind. If our policy and our proposals receive the approval of Parliament and the approval of officials, such as those spoken of in *The Times* the other day, I am perfectly sure there will be no more want of goodwill and zeal on the part of the Indian Civil Service, than there would be in the officers of his Majesty's Fleet, or his Majesty's Army. It would be just the same. I should like to read another passage from *The Times* letter : 'It would probably be incorrect to say that the bulk of the Civil Service in the Bombay Presidency are gravely apprehensive. Most of them are not unnaturally anxious'—I agree; it is perfectly natural that they should be anxious—'but the main officials in whose judgment most confidence can be placed, regard the future with the buoyant hopefulness without which an Englishman in India is lost indeed.' All that is reassuring, and no sign nor whisper reaches me that any responsible man or any responsible section or creed, either in India or here, has any desire whatever to wreck our scheme. And let me go further. Statesmen abroad showing themselves capable of reflection, are watching us with interest and wishing us well. Take the remarkable utterance of President Roosevelt the other day at Washington. And if we turn from Washington to Eastern Europe, I know very well that any injustice, any suspicion that we were capable of being unjust, to Mahommedans in India, would certainly provoke a severe and injurious reaction in Constantinople. I am alive to all these things. Mr. Ameer Ali said he was sure the Secretary of State would meet out just and equitable treatment to all interests, if their views were fairly laid before him. He did me no more than justice. The Government are entirely zealous and in earnest, acting in thorough good faith, in the desire to press forward these proposals. I may tell you that our Bill is now quite ready. I shall introduce it at the first minute after the Address is over, and, when it reaches the Commons, it will be pressed forward with all the force and resolution that Parliamentary conditions permit. These are not mere pious opinions or academic reforms; they are proposals that are to take Parliamentary shape at the earliest possible moment; and after taking Parliamentary shape, no time will, I know,

be lost in India in bringing them as rapidly as possible into practical operation.

Now the first point Mr. Ameer Ali made was upon the unfairness to the members of the Mahommedan community, caused by reckoning in the Hindu census a large multitude of men who are not entitled to be there. I submit that it is not very easy—and I have gone into the question very carefully—to divide these lower caste and to classify them. Statisticians would be charged with putting too many into either one or the other division, wherever you choose to draw the line. I know the force of the argument, and am willing to attach to it whatever weight it deserves. I wish some of my friends in this country would study the figures of what are called the lower castes, because they would then see the enormous difficulty and absurdity of applying to India the same principles that are excellent guides to us Westerners who have been bread on the pure milk of the Benthamite word—one man one vote and every man a vote. That dream, by the way, is not quite realised even in this country; but the idea of insisting on a principle of that sort is irrational to anybody who reflects on this multiplicity and variety of races and castes.

Then there is the question of the joint electorate what is called the mixed paragraph in the paper that you were good enough to send to me. You recognise the very principle that was at the back of our minds, when we came to the conclusion about mixed electoral college. You say : 'In common with other well-wishers of India, the Committee look forward to a time when the development of a true spirit of compromise, or the fusion of the races, may make principles indicated by his Lordship capable of practical application without sacrificing the interests of any of the nationalities, or giving political ascendancy to one to disadvantage of the others. But the Committee venture to think that, however ready the country may be for constitutional reforms, the interests of the two great communities of India must be considered and dealt with separately.' Therefore, to begin with, the difference between us in principle about the joint electorate is only this : we are guilty of nothing worse than that we were premature, in the views of these gentlemen—we were impatient idealists. You say to me, 'It is very fine; we hope it will all come true; but you are premature; we must wait.' Still though premature, I observe that your own suggestion in one of those papers adopts and accepts the principle of the scheme outlined in our despatch. It is quite true to say, 'Oh, but you are vague in your despatch'. Yes, a despatch is not a Bill. A Minister writing a despatch does not put in all the clauses and sections and subsections and schedules. It is the business of a Minister composing a despatch like mine of 27 November 1908 to indicate only general lines—general enough to make the substance and body of the scheme intelligible, but still general. I should like to say a word about the despatch. It is constantly assumed that in the despatch we prescribed and ordered the introduction of the joint electoral college. If any of you will be good enough to look at the words, you will find that no language of that

sort—no law of the Medes and Persians—is to be found in it. If you refer to paragraph 12 you will see that our language is this :

'I suggest for your consideration that the object in view might be better secured, at any rate in the more advanced provinces in India, by a modification of the system of popular electorate founded on the principle of electoral colleges.'

You see it was merely a suggestion thrown out for the Government of India, not a direction of the Mede and Persian stamp. You say, 'That for the purpose of electing members to the Provincial Councils, electoral colleges should be constituted on lines suggested by his Lordship, composed exclusively of Mahommedans whose numbers and mode of grouping should be fixed by executive authority.' This comes within the principle of my despatch, and we shall see—I hope very speedily—whether the Government of India discover objections to its practicability. Mark, electoral colleges 'composed exclusively of Mahommedans whose members and mode of grouping should be fixed by executive authority'—that is a proposition which is not outside the despatch. Whether practicable or not it is a matter for discussion between us here and the Government of India.

The aim of the Government and yours is identical—that there shall be (to quote Mr. Ameer Ali's words) 'adequate, real, and genuine Mahommedan representation.' Now, where is the difference between us ? The machinery we commended, you do not think possible. As I have told you, the language of the despatch does not insist upon a mixed electoral college. It would be no departure in substance from the purpose of our suggestion, that there should be a separate Mahommedan electorate—an electorate exclusively Mahommedan; and in view of the wise and remote distances, and difficulties organisation in consequence of those distances in the area constituting a large province, I am not sure that this is not one of those cases where election by two stages would not be convenient, and so there might be a separate electoral college exclusively Mahommedan. That is, I take it, in accordance with your own proposal. There are various methods by which it could be done. In the first place an election exclusively Mahommedan might be direct into the Legislative Council. To this it may be said that it would be impossible by reason of distance. In the second place, you could have an election by separate communities to a local board, and the local board should be the electoral college, the Mahommedans separating themselves, from the other members of the board for that purpose. *Thirdly*, the members of the local board, the communities being separate in the same way, could return a member for the electoral college. *Fourthly*, you might have a direct election to an electoral college by the community, and this electoral college would return a representative to the Legislative Council. These, you see, are four different expedients which well deserve consideration for attaining our end.

I go to the next point, the apprehensions lest if we based our system on numerical strength alone, a great injustice would be done to your community.

Of course we all considered that from the Viceroy downwards. Whether your apprehensions are well founded or not, it is the business of those who call themselves statesmen to take those apprehensions into account, and to do the best we can in setting up a working system to allay and meet such apprehensions. If you take numerical strength as your basis, in the Punjab and Eastern Bengal Mahommedans are in a decisive majority. In the Punjab the Moslem population is 53 per cent to 38 per cent Hindu. In Eastern Bengal 58 per cent are Moslem and 37 per cent are Hindu. Therefore, in those two provinces, on the numerical basis alone, the Mahommedans will secure sufficient representation. In Madras, on the other hand, the Hindus are 89 per cent, against 6 per cent of Moslems, and, therefore numbers would give no adequate representation to Moslem opinion. In Bombay the Moslems are in the ratio of $3\frac{3}{4}$ to 14 millions—20 per cent to 77 per cent. The conditions are very complex in Bombay, and I need not labour the details of this complexity. I am inclined to agree with those who think that it might be left to the local Government to take other elements into view required or suggested by local conditions. Coming to the United Provinces, there the Moslems are $6\frac{3}{4}$ millions to $40\frac{3}{4}$ Hindus—14 per cent to 85 per cent. This ratio of numerical strength no more represents the proportion in the elements of weight and importance, than in Eastern Bengal does the Hindu ratio of 37 per cent to 58 per cent of Moslems. You may set off each of those two cases against the other. Then there is the great province of Bengal, where the Moslems are one quarter of the Hindus—9 millions to 39 millions—18 per cent to 77 per cent.

We all see, then, that the problem presents extraordinary difficulty. How are you going in a case like the United Provinces, for example, to secure that adequate and substantial representation, which it is the interest and the desire of the Government for its own sake to secure. No fair-minded Moslem would deny in Eastern Bengal, any more than a fair-minded non-Moslem would deny it in the United Provinces, that there is no easy solution. You see, gentlemen, I do not despair of finding a fair minded man in a controversy of this kind. From information that reaches me I do not at all despair of meeting fair minded critics of both communities, inspite of the sharp antagonism that exists on many matters between them. But whatever may be the case with Mahommedans and Hindus, there is one body of men who are bound to keep a fair mind, and that is the Government. The Government are bound, whatever you may do among yourselves, strictly, and I will even say sternly, to insist on overcoming all obstacles in a spirit of absolute equity. Now, what is the object of the Government ? It is that the Legislative Councils should represent truly and effectively, with a reasonable approach to the balance of real social forces, the wishes and needs of the communities themselves. That is the object of the Government, and in face of a great problem of that kind, algebra, arithmetic, geometry, logic—none of these things will do your business for you. You have to look at it widely and away from those sciences, excellent in their place, but not of much service when

you are solving awkward political riddles. I think if you allow some method of leaving to a local authority the power of adding to the number of representatives from the Mahommedans community, or the Hindu community, as the case may be, that might be a possible and prudent way of getting through this embarrassment. Let us all be clear of one thing, namely and I thought of this when I heard one or two observations that fell from Mr. Ameer Ali—that no general proposition can be wisely based on the possession by either community, either of superior civil qualities or superior personal claims. If you begin to introduce that element, you perceive the perils to that peace and mutual goodwill which we hope to emerge by and by, though it may take longer than some think. I repeat that I see no harm from the point of view of a practical working compromise, in the principle that population, or numerical strength, should be the main factor in determining how many representatives should sit for this or the other community; but modifying influences may be both wisely and equitably taken into account in allotting the numbers of such representatives.

As regards Indian members on the Executive Council, if you will allow me to say so, I think it was dubious tactics in you to bring that question forward. We were told by those who object, for instance, to my recommending to the Crown an Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive—that it will never do; that if you choose a man of one community, the other will demand a second. The Executive Council in all—this will not be in the Bill—consists of six members. Suppose there were to be two vacancies, and I were to recommend to the Crown the appointment of one Mahommedan and one Hindu, the effect would be that of the six gentlemen one-third would be non-English. You may think that all right, but it would be a decidedly serious step. Suppose you say you will bring in a Bill, then for the purpose of appointing an extra member always to be an Indian. That is much more easily said than done. I am talking perfectly plainly. You would not get such a Bill. I want to talk even more plainly. I want to say that reference to the Hindu community or the Mahommedan community, in respect to the position of the Viceroy's Executive, is entirely wide of the mark in the view, I know, both of the Viceroy and of myself. If, as I have already said I expect, it may be my duty by and by to recommend to the Crown the name of an Indian member, it will not be solely for the sake of placing on the Viceroy's Executive Council an Indian member simply as either a Hindu or a Mahommedan. Decidedly we are of opinion that the Governor-General in Council will be all the more likely to transact business wisely, if he has a responsible Indian adviser at his elbow. But the principle in making such a recommendation to the Crown, would be to remove the apparent disability in practice—for there is no disability in law—of an Indian holding a certain appointment because he is an Indian. That is a principle we do not accept; and the principle I should go upon—and I know Lord Minto would say exactly the same—is the desirability of demonstrating that we hold to the famous promise

made in the proclamation of Queen Victoria in 1858, that if a man is fully qualified in proved ability and character to fill a certain post, he shall not be shut out by race or religious faith. There is a very great deal more to be said on this most important subject; but to-day I need only tell you which I do with all respect, without complaining of what you have said, and without denying that in practical usage some day there may be means of alternation for meeting your difficulty—I see no chance whatever of our being able to comply with your present request.

I have endeavoured to meet you as fairly as I possibly could. I assure you again we are acting in earnest, with zeal and entire good faith; and any suggestion that any member of the Government, either in this office or the Government of India, has any prejudice whatever against Mahommedans, for the purposes of political administration in India, is one of the idlest and most wicked misapprehensions, that could possibly enter into the political mind. I am greatly encouraged by having met you. I am sure that you speak in the name of important bodies of your own countrymen and of your own community. I am sure that you are going to look at our proposals in a fair and reasonable spirit, and give us credit for a desire to do the best that we possibly can in the interests of all the communities in India, including also the interests of the British Government. I can only tell you further, that if this action of ours fails, miscarries, and is wrecked, it will be a considerable time before another opportunity occurs. You will never again—I do not care whether the time be long or be short—you will never again have the combination of a Secretary of State and a Viceroy, who are more thoroughly in earnest in their desire to improve Indian Government, and to do full justice to every element of the Indian population.

Source : Viscount Morley : *Indian Speeches*, London, 1909.

43

TELEGRAM FROM MORLEY TO MINTO

2 February 1909

A Deputation from the London Branch of the All-India Muslim League has laid before me certain criticism and suggestions in connection with the Council Reform. They urge that Mahommedan should have separate electorates for election of members and the representative bodies from Rural Boards upwards from their own community. For Provincial Councils, they propose electoral colleges composed exclusively of Mahommedans, numbers

and grouping to be fixed by Government the electorate for these colleges to be exclusively Mahommedans, consisting of (1) Members of Boards and Corporations, (2) Landowners, (3) University graduates, (4) Other persons eligible for Membership of Boards; each elector to have one vote. Colleges constituted to elect Mahommedan Members to Provincial Councils either from own body or general electorate. For Viceroy's Legislative Council, Mahommedan Electoral College to be formed of provincial electoral colleges, Fellows of Local Universities, members and persons qualified for Membership of Provincial Legislative Councils.

I shall be glad to hear what view you take of this scheme of obtaining Mahommedan representation by means of exclusively Mahommedan electoral college which I described to Deputation as not outside terms of my Despatch. They appear to me to deserve careful consideration.

Source : Minto Papers : Telegraphic Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1909.

44

LETTER FROM MORLEY TO MINTO

2 February 1909

Certain criticisms and suggestions regarding the Councils Reforms have been laid before me by a deputation of the All-India Moslem League. They urge that there should be separate electorate for Mahommedans for the election, to representative bodies from Rural Boards to upwards, of members from their own community. They propose that there should be Electoral College for the Provincial Councils composed exclusively of Mahommedans, Government fixing the numbers and grouping. That the electorate for these colleges should be exclusively Mahommedans, and should consist of (1) Members of Corporations and Boards, (2) Landowners, (3) University graduates, and (4) Other persons who are eligible for the Membership of Boards; and that each elector should have one vote. Mahommedan members for the Provincial Councils would be elected by colleges so constituted from their own body or from the general electorate. Mahommedan electoral college for the Legislative Council of the Governor-General should be formed of (1) Provincial electoral colleges, (2) Fellows of local universities, (3) Members of Provincial Legislative Councils and persons qualified for membership.

This scheme of obtaining Mahommedan representation by means of

exclusively Mahommedan electoral colleges I described to the deputation as not outside the terms of my Despatch, and I shall be glad to have your views thereon; it seems to me worthy of careful consideration. When may I expect draft regulations ? Please let me have them as soon as possible.

Source: Morley Papers : Proposals of the Government of India and Despatches of the Secretary of State, London, 1908.

45

LETTER FROM SIR BAMPFYLDE FULLER TO THE TIMES ON THE PROPOSED REFORMS

The proposed reforms of the Indian Legislative Councils are welcomed enthusiastically by Hindu politicians; they are eyed with very serious misgivings by the Mahommedan community. Both feelings are evoked by a single feature of the scheme. It is not the expansion of the elective element, not the increased authority of the Councils, that delights one camp and disappoints another, but the arrangements which are suggested by the Home Government for the registration of votes-arrangement which might not improbably throw almost all the elective seats into the hands of the lawyers, school-masters, and journalists, who are the stalwarts of the Hindu National Party.

Direct popular voting in India would be difficult to organise, dangerous in its incidents, and misleading in its results, and the members of the Legislative Councils who hold office by election are chosen, not by the votes of the public, but by committees or corporations, which, though constituted for other than political purposes, are assumed to express the political views of important sections of the population. These bodies include chambers of commerce, associations of landholders, and the Universities; but the most numerous and (for this purpose) the most important are the boards which have been established throughout the country for the management of rural and municipal affairs. These boards have almost invariably returned to the Legislative Councils, not men of practical experience, but lawyers, who find in aggressive politics an aptitude and an advertisement. Their monopoly of these seats is due in great measure to the procedure of election. The boards do not vote direct for declared candidates; they each elect a delegate, and the delegates meet in conclave where, after unreported discussion, candidates are selected and votes are cast for them. The arrangement lends itself with peculiar facility to political wire-pulling; the delegates are few in number, and the trouble and expense involved by delegation tends to limit selection

to professional politicians.

So far as the Provincial Legislative Councils are concerned (to which the Government wisely propose to limit the privilege of a non-official majority), the general effect of the reforms (stated approximately) will be to double their size, to raise the non-official element from under a half to over a half, and to increase the proportion of elected members from a third to two-fifths. This increase in the strength of the elective element is secured (very prudently), not by adding to the relative elective strength of rural and municipal boards, but by the inclusion of members for the more effective representation of the landholding community and of the Mahommedan community. But in place of permitting these communities to choose their own members, it is suggested that their privileges should, so to speak, be pooled with those of the rural and municipal boards, and the members to represent the communities and the boards should be chosen by an electoral college, which is to be formed by the votes of the landholding community and of the boards, but to which the Mahommedan community, as such will not contribute. Thus a college which is to represent three elements would be formed directly by only two of them. Mahommedans generally form but a small minority both of the landholding community and of the boards, so that the electoral college would be constituted by the votes of Hindus only. As a safeguard it is provided that the college must include a number of Mahommedans proportionate to the Mahommedan share of the members that are to be elected by it. That is to say, if the college is to elect three Hindus and one Mahommedan, one-fourth of the college must be Mahommedan, and if this fourth is not supplied by election the Government will intervene and supply it by nomination. But so far as election goes, the arrangements will leave the Mahommedans dependent for their share upon the votes of Hindus, who will certainly not be inclined to select Mahommedans who are known to be loyal to their own community. The Mahommedans who will have the best chances of election will be those whom their own community is inclined to stigmatize as renegades.

The introduction of this electoral college is apparently designed to meet two difficulties. In the first place, if Mahommedans are permitted to vote as a community they would in some cases have a double vote, since certain of them enjoy the franchise qualifications for rural and municipal boards, and vote upon elections to these boards. Secondly, difficulty is apprehended in collecting the voting power of the Mahommedan community, which is of course not concentrated in certain areas, but is intermixed with the Hindu population. The first of these difficulties undoubtedly exists; but it raises no new problem, as it affects the constitution of the present Legislative Councils and the complication which it introduces is theoretical rather than practical. A large proportion of those who now elect members to represent the Universities and the chambers of commerce may also vote upon elections to rural and municipal boards, or may be members of these boards, and they

are to be left in enjoyment of this double voting capacity. The case is similar with the landholders, who are now to be granted special representation upon the Legislative Councils, most of them may also vote upon elections to the boards or be elected to them. The second difficulty is really non-existent. Throughout the length and breadth of the country there are Mahommedan associations or *anjumans*, whose functions are primarily connected with education, but which are quite capable of voicing the wishes of the community and of electing persons to represent it. An objection may be raised that their constitution is not sufficiently definite or regular to fit them for the exercise of electoral functions. Under the existing law elections to the Legislative Councils are not complete until endorsed by the Government, so that legal difficulties arising out of electoral procedure may be avoided, and obviously unfit persons can be excluded. It is now proposed that election shall be legally complete in itself, and there is certainly a need of greater precision in the definition of electorates. But this could be met by a law enabling associations to register themselves, subject to such limitations as may be required to prevent them from being unduly numerous or ineffectually small, and providing for the formation by each association of a committee to exercise its electoral functions. There should be no reason to apprehend that such a provision would not be accepted by the Mahommedan community. It would also be useful for the more definite organisation of existing and future associations of Landholders.

As matter stands, then, the Mahommedans are to be denied the right to vote as a community for reasons which are not pressed in the case of other societies. Their suspicions are increased by the enthusiasm with which the proposed arrangements are greeted by the Hindu politicians, from whose revolutionary propaganda they have consistently held aloof, and it is not surprising that they should apprehend that the Secretary of State's proposals are calculated to submerge their individuality, and should regard his scheme, not merely as an unworthy return for loyalty, but as conflicting with the assurances that were given them by the Viceroy two years ago. They will not be consoled by the aphorism that minorities must expect to suffer.

I will add that, if we wish to secure honest voting and the return of men of practical capacity, it is desirable that each electoral body whether a rural or municipal board, an association of landholders, or a committee representing Mahommedan interests, should vote direct, and not through the agency of electoral delegates. We are forced to gather the wishes of the people from groups which stand between them and the Government, but it is really unnecessary to interpose a second filter. Deliberate judgment will count for more in the voting of the original electoral bodies, acting independently, then in the proceedings of a mixed collection of delegates. The interposition of electoral delegates between electors and candidates was apparently designed to give effect to the law under which a candidate, to be successful, must obtain, not a bare majority, but a majority of the total number of votes

recorded. This condition, if now left standing, can, however, be easily met by providing that each electoral body should not merely vote for a single candidate, but in its voting paper should record in order of preference the names of the candidates whom it would support, failing the election of its first choice. In compiling the votes an absolute majority can readily be secured to the most favoured candidate by striking off those who on a first count—or on a second count—stand at the bottom of the list, and transferring the votes given for them to the candidates who have been selected by the voters as their second or third alternative. I may mention that when drafting the regulations for the Legislative Council of the new province I was permitted to follow these lines, and the first elections were successfully carried out upon them.

It is, of course, necessary under this system that those who intend to stand for election should declare candidature beforehand, and not hold back till election actually commences. But this is in itself obviously desirable, and has lately been insisted upon by at least one Provincial Government.

Source : Cited in The Pioneer, 1 February 1909.

46

MEMORIAL PRESENTED BY SYED ALI IMAM, CHAIRMAN OF THE SPECIAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE, TO THE VICEROY

As authorised by the All-India Moslem League, I venture to submit this humble representation to Your Excellency on behalf of the Mussulmans of India on a subject that is at present occupying the most anxious thoughts of this community all over the country. That subject is the attitude of the Mahommedan community to the famous despatch of the Secretary of State dealing with the proposed reform of councils. The All-India Moslem League exhaustively dealt with the despatch at the sitting of its annual sessions held last December at Amritsar and is now anxious to place befor Your Excellency through this representation, some of the grave considerations that arise out of the despatch, affecting the particular interests of the Mahommedans of India. The League is grateful to Your Excellency and the Secretary of State for the general policy of reform contained in the despatch and is of opinion that the measure of popular element introduced to help the administration of the country, with the safeguards provided in the despatch, will be largely beneficial in fostering the spirit and strengthening the practice

of co-operation between the rulers and the ruled. The League has every reason to believe that the responsibility created by the grant of generous concessions and the inauguration of a policy of liberal regard for popular views, will be of considerable service to prepare Indians to take a proper part in the administration of their countrymen. While the Mahommedans, equally with their non-Moslem country, gratefully acknowledge the liberal and beneficient concessions contained in the despatch, they nonetheless look upon the proposed provision of class representation contained in the said despatch with much dismay and disappointment. In the matter of class representation the Moslems think that Lord Morley when dealing, however tentatively, with their case has overlooked the claims of this community in two weighty particulars. These two are : (1) The effectiveness of Mahommedan representation through the machinery his lordship seemed to favour in the despatch. (2) The importance of the Mahommedan community in relation (*a*) to seats in the Legislative Councils, and (*b*) in the Executive Councils.

For the sake of convenience I will, with Your Excellency's permission, deal with the two particulars separately. As to the effectiveness of class representation, the League has read with great gratification the principle enunciated in the paragraph 9 of the despatch, and is of opinion that a more statesmanlike treatment of Indian conditions was not possible. It welcomes, therefore, heartily and gives its most loyal support to the pronouncement that no system of representation would be satisfactory if it did not provide for the presence in the Couucils of sufficient representatives of communities so important as are the Mahommedans and the landowners. The significance of the words 'sufficient representatives of communities' denotes that the communities mentioned shall have such representatives in the Councils as enjoy the confidence of the communities they represent, and that the sufficiency of their numbers should be judged by the importance of their constituencies. The League, believing in the earnestness and soundness of the principle contained in the said para 9, naturally looked forward to its expression and maintenance in any suggestions that may be tentative, but illustrative of the method and manner in which these wise provisions were to be carried out, I have to say my lord, that paragraph 12 of the despatch which contains the suggestions relating to class representations does not only suffer from deplorable vagueness of language, but is unhappily susceptible of a construction completely subversive of the just and wise policy which was pronounced in the earlier paragraph. As the League was therefore greatly alarmed at what appeared to be an unaccountable inconsistency, having the germs of much political trouble for the Mahommedans of India, the three important resolutions of the League bearing on the despatch which I had the honour to put from the chair at Amritsar will convey to Your Excellency the intensity of the feeling of the Mahommedans on the subject.

(The resolutions and the speech introducing them are herewith annexed.)

Since then the London branch of the Moslem League headed by

Mr. Ameer Ali, C.I.E., and Major Syed Hasan Bilgrami, M.D., I.M.S. waited in deputation on the Secretary of State, and the All-India Moslem League notes with a great sense of relief that portion of Lord Morley's speech in reply to the deputation that deals with class representations as it affects the Mussulmans of India. It is the principle of mixed Electoral Colleges that created in the mind of the Mussulmans the apprehension that the elections, as influenced by such a principle, will result in the return of those who would be members of the Mahommedan Community, but by no means their representatives, as they would only be mandatories and nominees of the non-Moslem majority. The pronouncement of the Secretary of State that the principle of mixed Electoral Colleges has not been laid down as an unalterable one in the despatch, and that his lordship was not sure that the election might not be held in two stages with exclusive Mahommedan Electoral Colleges, has been read by Mahommedans with much thankfulness as it has helped completely to dispel on this point the gloom that paragraph 12 of the despatch had cast on the prospects of the Mahommedans participating in the benefit that will result from the contemplated changes. The All-India Moslem League in this connection begs to assure Your Excellency that it has not the least desire that an iron wall should be raised for ever between the Mahommedans and their Hindu countrymen, but what it does desire is that considering the conditions prevailing in India, a real, effective and truly Mahommedan representation is essential in the best interests of the country. Having this all important aspect of class representation in view, and guarding it zealously against any encroachment, it will be a satisfaction to the Mahommedans of India to be associated as much as possible with their non-Moslem countrymen.

Both these objects are looked upon by the Mussulmans as essential for the proper adjustment of the balance of social forces of the country and as such I beg to put before Your Excellency the following method of election as a possible solution of the problem. We suggest that the denominational element must be carried down to the very base, the first voting, and that it must necessarily be carried up to the intermediary agency, the Electoral Colleges, but that it need not be necessary to apply it to the representative who will be returned to the Council Chamber, whether provincial or imperial. It may be rightly urged, Your Excellency, that the religious faith of the man who sits in Council is not of any consequence to his constitution, but that his political creed is. It seems, therefore, advisable that whereas the constituencies, both original and intermediary, should be strictly denominational, the representatives in the Councils need not be so. As long as they enjoy the confidence of their electors and represent their political views faithfully, I do not see the least objection to leave to a denominational Electoral College the option to choose its representative in Council from any community it likes. In this way it will be possible for a Mussulman electorate to elect a Hindu, Parsi, Christian, or any other, and similarly for a Hindu electorate to choose

a Mussulman, Parsi, Christian, or any other, to represent it in the Councils. I fully realise that at first the denominational electorate will naturally hesitate to make the experiment of electing a representative from any community other than their own, but the option will nevertheless create great possibilities of drawing the different communities closer together, without in the least endangering the independence of action of each. I submit this scheme to Your Excellency's consideration in the hope that, whereas effective class representation of Mahommedans is impossible without giving them separate electorates from the very beginning, to the end, the possibilities of avoiding political isolation between them and their non-Moslem countrymen may not be disregarded. I may be allowed to say in this connection that if the full due of the Mahommedans as to the number of seats in the Councils can be secured to them by means of separate and denominational electorates of which the Mahommedan section of the rural and municipal boards may form a part, the Mahommedans have no desire to court the resentment of their non-Moslem countrymen to vote again in the said Boards for the purpose of returning members to Councils. The Mussulmans think, Your Excellency, that the suggestions I have ventured to put forward above will appreciably dissipate any objection that may have been based on the ground of a double vote.

In dealing with the importance of the Mahommedan community in regard to the claim to seats in the Councils I beg permission to treat subject in two parts : (1) Legislative Councils, and (2) Executive Councils. Now as to the Legislative Councils, the League is of opinion that Lord Morley's despatch under estimates the claim of the Mahommedans by suggesting that their importance, and, as such, their claim to seats on the Councils, should be considered in correspondence to their proportion to the total population of the country. The League submits that the mere test of numbers is misleading and dangerous, as it is limited in its outlook and is not wide enough to embrace the social, traditional, and religious considerations attaching to the Indian Mahommedans as a community. The Indian Mussulmans contribute largely to the defence of the Empire, and considering the population, of the Frontier Province, Kashmir and the Punjab, it is not too much to say that the Mahommedans may rightly claim to have the honour of being the gatekeepers of India. It may also be submitted that as a community their religious association with the Islamic countries of the world is not without interest to enhance the value of their position in India. The traditional loyalty of the Indian Mahommedan to the British Government, and his religious obligation loyally to support the 'Ul-ul-Amar', the rulers, are, I submit, no small asset in the Imperial economy of India. It is with much gratitude that the Mussulmans of India cherish as their most valued political possession the just pronouncement Your Excellency was pleased to make in reply to the well-known All-India Mahommedan deputation that waited upon Your Excellency at Simla in October 1906.

Your Excellency then said to the members of the deputation, 'You justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service it has rendered to the Empire.' These words have sunk deep into the hearts of the Indian Mahommedans, and any measure to detract from their gravity and importance can only be accompanied with a sense of injustice to which so far the Indian Mahommedans have remained unhabituated at the hands of the British Government. I can hardly convey to Your Excellency the extent to which such a measure is likely to occasion disappointment and consequent dissatisfaction to the Mahommedans of India. The reply of the Secretary of State on this point to the recent Mahommedan deputation in London mentioned above has, I am glad to say, in a measure abated the consuming anxiety of the Mahommedans. His Lordship does not see any harm in that, while numbers should be the main factor in determining the extent of representation, modifying causes might influence the number of representatives. The Mahommedans feel confident that wherever they may be in numerical minority as for instance in the Imperial Council, the Councils of the Government of Madras and Bombay, or any other Provincial Council, the particular considerations mentioned above, attached to their community as a distinct people, will always be found to be a sufficient and strong modifying cause to influence the number of the representatives over and above what they are entitled to on the ground of their numerical strength. It is this gleam of hope that has stopped the spread of the Mahommedan discontent created by paragraph 12 of the despatch, and I do most earnestly beseech Your Excellency to give the weight of your high authority to the fulfilment of hopes that have been so trustfully reposed by a community that has always implicitly believed in the justice and good faith of the British Government.

It is imposible for me to pass on to the consideration of the second part of this subject without submitting to Your Excellency that the despatch of the Government of India on the reform scheme, dated the 1st of October 1908, had carefully considered the claim of the Mahommedans, and had provided for them the means of securing ten seats on the Imperial Council, five by a special electorate, and almost certainly at least five by general electorates out of twenty-eight seats to be filled by elected members. This arrangement was in keeping with the maintenance of the principle of effective Mahommedan representation, and had also the virtue of linking various class interests together in the rural and territorial electorates.

The Mahommedans are under a heavy debt of gratitude to Your Excellency and your Executive Council for the despatch which was characterised not only by far-sighted statesmenship, but had the great virtue of adjusting divergent claims and interests, on a considerate and equitable basis, and unless in some form or other the reform scheme is carried out on the principles, on which Your Excellency's despatch was based, I cannot foretell

its grateful acceptance by the Mahommedans or any other minority, great or small.

As regards the Mahommedan attitude to the Executive Council, I have much pleasure in submitting to Your Excellency that the League supports the suggestions of the creation of such Councils in the larger Provinces with a view to strengthen the hands of Lieutenant-Governors. The League also welcomes the suggestion of enlarging the Executive Council of Bombay and Madras. The League, is aware that the Provincial Executive Councils created or extended will not be in any case large enough in point of number to admit two Indians in each, and as such the League hesitates to ask for such a concession at present, but trusts it will come into existence in its own fulness of time. The League nevertheless has every hope that for the reason of the limited scope of appointment of Indians to the Provincial Executive Council the claim of the Mahommedans will not be overlooked, and that as long as the requisite ability, efficiency, and integrity for the discharge of the duties of such an office will be forthcoming due regard will be paid to the aspirations of the Hindus and Mahommedans equally to serve their country and enjoy the esteem and confidence of the Government. As regards the appointment of Indians to the Executive Council of the Viceroy the League looks upon such a measure as the surest way of creating popular confidence in the administration of the country, and in as much as the most vital and far-reaching measures of administration emanate from the Imperial Executive Council, and also in as much as the policy of the Executive Council, guides and directs the Government of the entire country, the League cannot but look upon this measure as a concession of the greatest possible import. I am glad to be in a position to assure Your Excellency that the League looks upon this favour as an imperial gift to the people for which the most grateful thanks of the country are due to the rulers. The question of the appointment of a Mahommedan to a seat on this Council came up before the League at Amritsar, since then it has received much prominence by the reply of Lord Morley to the London deputation, and it appears that the difficulty of the Secretary of State in meeting the Mahommedans' wish lies principally in the fact that he does not see his way to reserve two seats out of six in favour of Indians if he were to appoint a Hindu and a Mahommedan at the same time. He thinks it to be a serious step to make one-third of the Council Indian. The League, however, submits that there is a solution in this difficulty by creating a seventh membership. An extension in this direction will not be at all unreasonable as we have so far had no membership for education, to which might be added sanitation. Education has become a great, and is likely to become a greater, problem in the administration of India, and the appointment of a Member for this all important work will secure at least two highly appreciable advantages. One will be the removal of a great want and the other will be the opportunity to satisfy both the great communities of India, Hindus

and Mahommedans. The League feels very keenly on the question of the appointment of a Mahommedan to the Imperial Executive Council. It will be but the adjustment of political balance to have in the Executive Council of the Viceroy representatives of both the communities. The League begs to assure Your Excellency that there are now amongst the Mahommedans of India men who are not wanting in the requisite qualifications necessary for such a high office. For all that a noble lord may have said in the House of Peers in England the League begs emphatically to assert that both the communities, Hindus and Mahommedans, can furnish men of marked ability to serve on the Executive Council of the Viceroy and as such the crowning glory of the reform will remain dim without Hindus and Mahommedans being given an equal chance of serving their country in close and confidential association with the head of the administration.

In submitting the above representation the League entertains the hope that it will receive from Your Excellency the gracious consideration to which I humbly submit it is entitled.

Source : Morley Papers, 1909.

47

LETTER FROM S. RAZA ALI TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING THE MINORITIES AND THE REFORMS SCHEME

Every thoughtful Indian, who believes that self-government is a plant of slow growth and that the structure of society and the peculiar conditions obtaining in India cannot be changed with the stroke of a statesman's pen, will readily agree that the scheme of reforms recently announced in the despatch of Lord Morley is more liberal than was expected. All communities and classes have reason to congratulate themselves on the concessions allotted to their share. But it is proposed in this letter to discuss the scheme with reference to the Mahommedans and the landholders. Take the case of the former. The Government of India proposed that the four provinces which had the largest Mahommedan population namely, Bengal, Eastern Bengal and Assam, the United Provinces, and the Punjab, should each be allowed to return a member to the Imperial Legislative Council. The fifth seat was given to Madras and Bombay alternately. After discussing the views of the Provincial Governments as to the feasibility of forming Mahommedan electorates, the Government of India made the following recommendation :

'Our view is that in the provinces where election by a regular Mahommedan electorate is feasible, that method should be adopted; that Mahommedan Associations should be made use of where electorate cannot be formed; and that nomination by Government should be resorted to where neither of the first two methods is practicable.' Now without rejecting these proposals Lord Morley has recommended the plan of Electoral Colleges. There is not the shadow of a doubt that the Secretary of State has suggested it in the honest belief that due representation will be secured to various sections of the people by a comparatively simple process. But let us see how it will affect important minorities, such as the Mahommedans. Briefly the scheme is this. Suppose that the total population of a province is 20 millions, of which 15 millions are Hindus and 5 millions Mahommedans, and the number of members to be elected 12. Divide the province into three electoral areas in each of which three Hindus and one Mahommedan are to be elected. In each of these areas constitute an Electoral College consisting of, let it be supposed, a hundered members of whom 75 should be Hindus and 25 Mahommedans. And it would be the privilege of the Electoral College as a body to elect three representatives for the Hindus and one for the Mahommedans. Now the address presented by the Mahommedan deputation to the Viceroy at Simla stated in most clear and unambiguous language that in any system of election, in which the Hindus formed the majority, no Mahommedan could hope to be elected unless he were prepared to sacrifice his own views to those of the majority opposed to his own community; and that if he might be willing to make that sacrifice, he would cease to be a representative of his community. The address proceeded that the only way of securing Mahommedan representation was to constitute an exclusively Mahommedan electorate for each province. But for the fact that we know there is not a more honest, sincere and just Briton than Lord Morley, it might have been said that every precaution has been taken in the Electoral Colleges' scheme to deprive the Mahommedans of the remotest chance of representation, while seeming to bestow it upon them. The Provincial Legislative Council of the United Provinces, to take one out of many cases similar in principle, is to consist of 17 elected members excluding the two representatives of the Allahabad University and the Upper India Chamber of Commerce. Now if the Electoral College for these Provinces were to consist of 102 members, it follows that 24 of them would be Mahommedans and 12 landholders. The remaining 66 members would be Hindus almost to a man. Suppose that the Mahommedans want to return A, a Mahommedan who has devoted much of his time and money to bettering the condition of his community; and that the Hindus are for electing X, another Mahommedan whose chief qualifications are that he is a bitter opponent of the partition of Bengal, vehemently preaches boycott, advocates the introduction of the Bhasha language as a compulsory subject in schools and is known not to have, missed any annual sitting of the Congress. Now which of these two rival candidates will be returned ? Why,

X assuredly as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. Even if the representatives of the landowning class side with the Mahommedans, which is not probable, their joint forces will yet suffer a crushing defeat, namely, 36 to 66. The net result is that the Mahommedan community will be represented by persons who happen to be Hindus in all but name. These remarks apply with equal force to the case of landholders. If the power of constituting an electorate had been entrusted to a Congress leader, for instance, Mr. Gokhale, who, it should be remembered, was in England at the time when the Secretary of State wrote his despatch and is known to have had several interviews with him, he could have hardly devised a more clever scheme for rendering the Mahommedan vote ineffective than Lord Morley's. In the face of definite proposals by the Government of India it is no small wonder that he should have managed to see difficulties in the formation of Mahommedan electorates. Even if the task were truly Herculean, the efforts to accomplish it would be well worth making. It is agreed on all hands that representation of different communities and classes is absolutely necessary, but how can you secure that representation unless you create special constituencies? The reason of the subject presenting difficulties to Lord Morley is that he has sought to work from top to bottom. Logically it ought not to have been taken in hand till the composition, the electorates and the powers of district boards and municipalities were settled.

The address presented by the Mahommedan deputation stated that municipal and district boards 'form as it were the initial rungs in the ladder of self-government, and it is here that the principle of representation is brought home intimately to the intelligence of the people'. It went on to say that the representation of the community on these bodies had been wholly inadequate, and requested that the number of Hindus and Mahommedans entitled to seats should be declared in every district. The suggestion seems to have met with the approval of the Government of India, who, in their circular letter of the 24th August 1907, expressed themselves in favour of the principle of assigning a fixed proportion of seats on these bodies to the followers of the two religions. If we began with reforming them, more than half the difficulties in forming special electorates would disappear. Suppose that the municipal and district Boards in a certain district are composed of 20 members each, of whom 12 are Hindus and 8 Mahommedans. The latter might be allowed to elect one of their number to vote at the election of one Mahommedan member to the Provincial Legislative Council. In this way the representatives of these bodies might be allowed to fill half the number of seats appropriated to Mahommedans in that chamber. Once we get our rural and municipal boards constituted in such a manner as to secure the due representation of every section of the population, the process of building up on their basis a revised constitution for the Provincial Councils becomes comparatively easy. But it should not be forgotten that the boards are only part of the system of special constituencies, and care must be taken

to introduce popular element into them. There is nothing worse than the monopoly of representation by one class.

To constitute a Mahommedan electorate, which should be feasible and at the same time give satisfaction to the community, is no easy matter; but the following rough scheme would appear to be free from the difficulties which are seen by Lord Morley and may, with necessary modifications, serve as the basis of an electorate, in which, it may be said once for all, that no non-Mahommedan is included. Mahommedan electorates for Provincial Councils : Group I. (*a*) Municipal Commissioners; (*b*) Members of district boards. Group II. (*a*) Those who pay income tax on an annual income of Rs. 1,000; (*b*) those who derive from land an annual income of Rs. 1,000 or pay the same amount as land revenue; (*c*) Graduates of Universities of five years' standing. Each of the two groups may be allowed to elect half the Mahommedan Councillors.

Again Lord Morley's Electoral Colleges make no provision for elections to the Imperial Legislative Council; and he has to admit that 'some modification of the scheme suggested for the provinces will no doubt be necessary.' To creat a Mahommedan electorate for this purpose is less difficult, and it may be constituted somewhat on the following lines. Mahommedan electorate for Imperial Council : (1) Members of the Provincial Legislative Council; (2) Fellows of the local University; (3) Gentlemen in service of British Government getting an annual salary of not less than Rs. 12,000; (4) Gentlemen belonging to the professional classes who pay income tax on an annual income of not less than Rs. 15,000. It will be noticed that Mahommedan landholders have been omitted from this scheme for the simple reason that the land owning class has been assigned separate representation, and the mere accident that they profess a certain creed should not entail a forfeiture of their rights as members of that class. They should, therefore, be included in the small class of landholders rather than counted amongst the huge population of Mussulmans. The plan of giving them a place under both the heads is harmless in itself, but does not meet with the approval of Lord Morley who is against giving a double vote to any person, though it may be remarked in passing that some people will very likely have it, for instance, fellows of Universities who also possess qualifications carrying a right to vote in the territorial electorates. And here it may be appropriately pointed out that Mahommedans are in no way anxious to vote in the territorial electorates which Lord Morley fears would be resented by other classes of the population, provided that they are allowed to have their own electorates. The object of bestowing separate representation on the landed classes will most probably be defeated unless a similar course is adopted as regards them. Their case is very much like that of the Mahommedans. Both are sure to be swamped in a territorial electorate in which they can at best be an impotent minority. Considering that the number of those who pay an annual land revenue of Rs. 10,000 or more cannot be very large in each province, there should not

be much difficulty in forming the landholders' electorates on some such principles as follows : Landholders' Electorates for Provincial Councils : Landholders having an annual income of Rs. 10,000 or paying the same amount as land revenue. Landholders Electorate for Imperial Council : (1) Landholding members of the Provincial Council; (2) Landholders having an annual income of Rs. 25,000 or paying the same amount as land revenue; (3) Landholding members who have served on the Imperial Council for an uninterrupted period of eight years.

The last question discussed in the despatch is the expansion of the Executive Councils of Madras and Bombay and the creation of similar councils in the four major provinces. We are further told that it is contemplated to admit Indians to these councils. Mahommedans throughout India rejoice at these valued concessions. They are sometimes charged by unfriendly critics with caring more for their own interests than the welfare of the country. Nothing could be farther from the truth. They are in no degree less anxious than the self-styled 'children of the soil', to make India a great country; but they clearly see that no system of representation can promote the true interests of the country in which the counsels of their Hindu fellow countrymen prevail to the exclusion of themselves. Now the appointment of Indian to the Executive Councils is one of the most important reforms embodied in the despatch. The followers of Islam being less numerous in the Madras and Bombay Presidencies may acquiesce in the appointments being given to the Hindus. But in other provinces, where they form a very large proportion of the population, such a measure will create deep discontent. Take, for instance, the Governor-General's Executive Council, which in many respects resembles the Cabinet in the British constitution. If one Indian member, as Lord Morley has announced, is to be appointed he will in all probability be a Hindu His Lordship has insisted—and for good reasons on maintaining a substantial official majority in the Imperial Legislative Council. Admittedly the body which is charged with executive functions is more important than the one that legislates. Therefore, the claim of the Mahommedans for the appointment of a member of their community to the highest executive body is by no means illegitimate or extravagant. There is no doubt that the number of these posts being limited, it is not possible to secure the due representation of all the races and creeds that inhabit our country. But so far as the adjustment of sharply conflicting claims of the largest communities is concerned, the welfare of the followers of two religions only, namely Hinduism and Islam, need be taken into consideration, without forgetting the interests of Government of India and especially the Secretary of State by sending, if possible, a deputation to England, requesting them to make provision in the Bill, which is to be introduced in Parliament next session, for appointing two Indian, one Hindu, and one Mahommedan, to the councils of, at any rate, Eastern Bengal and Assam, the Punjab and the United Provinces. Above all it is absolutely

necessary that a Mahommedan should have a seat on the Governor-General's Executive Council, which might be done by creating one additional membership. Lord Morley says that it is an enormous advantage to have the point of view of an Indian. His Lordship was speaking of London, but when the scene is transferred to Calcutta it would be essential for Government to be in touch with Hindu and Mahommedan opinions, which together make up the Indian point of view. A careful perusal of the despatch would show that the Secretary of State is under the impression that Mahommedans are entitled to a share in the proposed reforms on the basis of their numerical strength. As has been pointed out times without number this is a mistake. Besides the fact that in estimating their position regard should be had to their political importance and the value of the contribution they make to the defence of the Empire, it is to be remembered that large sections of the population, classified as Hindus in the census of 1901, here no two things in common with the followers of Hinduism. In fact there is no more justification for calling them Hindus than there would be for counting them amongst Mahommedans. If a reduction be made for these sections, the proportion of Mahommedans to Hindus becomes something like four to eleven. It is to be earnestly hoped that this important fact will not be lost sight of when the time comes for re-constituting local and district boards and municipalities on the reformed lines. The representation accorded to Mahommedans in the Pr...incial Legislative Councils, notably in Eastern Bengal and Assam and the United Provinces, is hardly adequate and in view of the fact that they are to be so constituted as to dispense with the official majority, it is but just to request the Government of India and the Secretary of State to increase by one the number of seats allotted to the community. It only remains to notice that the North-West Frontier Province where the bulk of the population is Mahommedan, is to derive no benefit under the scheme. One can well understand the reason why local self-government is denied to it; but there does not seem to be much justification for refusing it the right to be represented in the Imperial Legislative Council by a nominated member.

Source : The Pioneer, 7 February 1909.

48

THE PIONEER ON LORD MORLEY AND THE MAHOMMEDANS

Now that we have the text of Lord Morley's reply to the deputation of Mahommedans that waited upon him on the 29th January 1909, we may readily conjecture that the delegates must have felt his presence with mingled feelings. Of admiration for the courtesy, the candour, the earnestness and the moral elevation which permeated his speech, and of regret at having failed to carry their points decisively, and at having met with a distinct rebuff on the one point to which probably they attached the greatest importance. As in duty bound they made great play with the question of the election of members of the Legislative Councils, and represented at length the objections which they and their co-religionists entertain to the scheme for electoral colleges described in the despatch of the 27th November. But what they were chiefly concerned about was evidently the proposed appointment of an Indian member to the Executive Council. Legislative Councils, it is well understood, will be restricted to debate and to recommendations. They will have no direct voice in the concerns of the administration and no controlling powers. They may make themselves troublesome and add to the labours of the Government, but they will be unable to refuse supplies, or to bring very effective pressure to bear upon the executive. It is natural that Mahommedans should take precautions to secure adequate representation on the Councils, and that they should urge strongly and fully, as is urged in the printed memorandum drawn up by the London Branch of the All India Moslem League, their objections to any system of election based strictly on numerical strength and on a joint electorate. But the impending change in the constitution of the Viceroy's Executive Council is in the view of the League a much more serious matter. The League recognises that this touches the seat of Government. Hitherto the constitution of the British Government in India has been such as to afford guarantee of neutrality between opposing races and creeds. But in the League's view this will no longer be necessarily the case. 'The introduction of a member from one community only', the memorandum stated, 'will be regarded as seriously prejudicing the rights and interests of the other.'

Lord Morley in his reply to the deputation showed conclusively the impossibility of placing two Indian members on the Council. 'Suppose', he said, 'there were to be two vacancies', and I were to recommend to the Crown the appointment of one Mahommedan and one Hindu, the effect would be that of the six gentlemen one-third would be non-English. That may be all right, but it would be a very serious step. Suppose you say that a Bill should be brought in to give effect to it. That is much more easily said than done. I am talking perfectly plainly. You would not get such a Bill. This is obvious. But if the Mahommedan request is clearly an impossible one, and if the

Mahommedans say that in that case they are opposed to any change in the composition of the Executive Council, the doubts which Lord MacDonnell and Sir Charles Crosthwaite have voiced and many other experienced administrators equally entertain will be greatly reinforced. The perception of this fact must have weighed with Lord Morley when he told the deputation that it was 'dubious tactics' to have brought the question forward, and that they had not made their 'path more easy for them by this kind of manifestation.' It explains the motive for the grave warning with which he concluded that 'if this action of the present Government—His Majesty's Government and the Government of India—fails and miscarries, and is wrecked, it will be a considerable time before another opportunity occurs.' That is the utterance of the Parliamentarian who sees in the attitude of the Mahommedan community a very serious obstacle to the realisation of that portion of the scheme of reform which contemplates the appointment of an Indian member to the Executive Council. This is the one proposal which, though it is said to have the approval of the Viceroy, is not in the Government of India's programme. It is not difficult to understand the importance which Lord Morley attaches to it. He is impressed with the advantage which has accrued to himself from the presence of Indian members in the Council of India. Politically he believes that a similar step in India will serve to conciliate the ambitions of the educated classes and add a lustre to the other constitutional changes. That these considerations do not exhaust the subject, and that many well-wishers of India and its peoples feel grave anxiety as to the wisdom of the step to which he is committed, goes without saying. But it is clear that this is the one reform to which he will be found obstinately attached. He is correspondingly sensitive to the attitude of the Mahommedans, who object to the change unless coupled with an impossible condition. If they persist in this attitude, they will supply the opposition in Parliament with a powerful argument. It can be urged, as Lord Morley urged in his speech to the deputation, that the Mahommedan request is based on a misunderstanding the principles underlying appointments to the Executive Council, that such appointments will be made without reference to the Hindu community or to the Mahommedan community and that the only operative consideration is that of personal fitness for office. But the respective communities know that in practice the question of creed cannot be thus obliterated; and the British Parliament may reasonably doubt whether a change which is opposed by a community of 50 millions is altogether wise.

As regards the question of the Electoral College and the adequate representation of Mahommedans on the Legislative Councils, the deputation may congratulate itself on having drawn from the Secretary of State such ample admission as to substantial justice of their contentions and as to the correctness of the premises on which they were founded. It is not too much to say that Lord Morley in his speech is not the Lord Morley of the despatch of the 28th November. The despatch of the 28th November in its advocacy of a joint electorate on a popular franchise and propor-

tional representation on the basis of the gross population was animated by the crudest Radicalism. The speech of Lord Morley is the speech of a man who is not the dupe of such theories. What did he say to the now familiar point that if comparative numbers are taken, the Mahommedan community is unfairly treated by reckoning as Hindus immense masses of low caste people with whom the Hindu will not associate? 'I know', he said, 'the force of the argument, and am willing to attach to it whatever weight it deserves. I wish some of my friends in this country would study the figures of what are called the lower castes, because they would then see the enormous difficulty and absurdity of applying to India the same principles that are very good guides to us Westerns who have been bread on the pure milk of the Benthamite word—one man one vote and every man a vote.... The idea of insisting on principle of that sort is absurd to anybody who reflects on the multiplicity of these varied castes.' How did he define the object which he had in view? 'It is that these Legislative Councils should represent truly and effectively, with a reasonable approach to the balance of real social forces, the wishes and needs of the communities themselves. That is the object of the Government, and in face of a great problem of that kind, algebra, arithmetic, geometry, logic—none of these things will do your business for you. You have to look at it widely and weigh from those sciences which are excellent in their place, but not always when you are solving profound complex political difficulties.' These two passages are inconsistent with the purely mechanical view of the problem of representation taken in the despatch. The paragraph in the despatch recommending the electoral college system, resting on the basis of municipalities and district boards, might have been written by any smart election agent, 'bread on the pure milk of the Benthamite word', and convinced of the correctness of the principle of counting noses. Lord Morley's speech is the speech of a man who sees through and beyond the common places of democracy, who has seriously projected his imagination into Indian conditions, and who, within the limits of party and politics, is anxious to make allowance for them. The general terms in which in these passages he epitomised the Indian problem might be held to condemn, as unsuited to the country, the expedient of electors and voting. Granted that some means should be sought of widening the basis of government in India, and of securing the representation of the social forces of the country, can that representation be adequately secured by electoral areas, ballot boxes, and canvassing? It is not certain that the vast majority of the population under any such system will not be represented, and that the small minority who actively concern themselves with the matter will represent only themselves and their own narrow class interests? Needless to say Lord Morley would not admit that this conclusion followed from his words. He still holds to the principle that the electoral machinery of the West may with certain alterations do good work in India, and that 'population, numerical strength, should be the main factor in determining

how many representatives should sit for this or the other community.' But to all intents and purposes he is ready to discard the scheme of the joint electoral college proposed in his despatch a few weeks ago, if the Government of India can suggest a workable alternative; and he has admitted that the Mahommedan community are entitled to a larger representation than the scheme conceded to them. He no longer counts heads, but weighs 'real social forces'. The process of conversion has been rapid and decisive. The deputation were told that his present views are all contained in the despatch, and that there is no inconsistency, no conversion. No one objects to bridges of this kind for the purpose of covering a retreat. They are easily built and they serve a temporary purpose. What the Government of India have now to do, what we hope they have already done, is to take the opening given to them, throw aside the absurd scheme of an Electoral College based on manipulating the suffrages of district boards and municipalities, and return to their original plan of representation of communities. The electoral college scheme of the despatch not only would fail to give Mahommedans their just number of representatives, but would also confine representation to one social stratum. An electorate composed mainly of the members of district and municipal boards does not fully represent the real social forces of the country. As India is situated at present, representation by communities or orders is the most reasonable expedient. The Government of India recognised this. They were temporarily over-ruled. Their master has now over-ruled himself and his Council. The door is thus open to a sane scheme, and let us hope the opportunity will not be lost. In this Mahommedan revolt against ill-judged proposals framed on popular radical lines there is this advantage that the Secretary of State will have an easier task in putting himself right with the left wing of the Ministry and his party. He is in a position to appeal to facts, and to show that 50 millions of people will not have the scheme bread on the pure milk of the Benthamite word, and that he has perforce to fall back on more conservative courses. This is not quite the attitude of the impatient idealist. But Lord Morley has on more than one occasion refused to enrol himself in the tribe. As a practical politician he may not be sorry that the Mahommedans have thrown their weight on the side of caution.

Source : The Pioneer, 19 February 1909.

49

THE TRIBUNE ON MUSLIM CLAIM FOR SPECIAL REPRESENTATION

The Muslim claims for special representation on the ground of their so called historical and political importance cannot similarly bear a moment's scrutiny. A vast majority of them are descendants of Hindu converts and as we have said, in most cases, they follow the vocations of their forefathers. And if any preferential franchise is to be given to them as a reward of loyalty and military service to the Empire why the same should not be granted to the Sikhs, the Gurkhas, the Rajputs and the Jats. Certainly the latter have rendered far more important military services than the Mahommedans. Indeed, the scale would weigh immeasurably in favour of the Sikhs, Gurkhas, Jats and Rajputs if any one is to tabulate the military services rendered by them and the Mahommedans. Indeed, the result of any close scrutiny can only result in cutting the ground from beneath the feet of Mr. Ameer Ali and his friends. And the new role, which Ameer Ali and his friends have been playing in the matters has to quote to significant phrase, been muddying the well of enquiring with the stick of misrepresentations.

Source : The Tribune, 23 February 1909.

50

THE TRIBUNE ON THE MUSLIM LEAGUE'S MEMORIAL

The Memorial presented on behalf of the Moslem League by Syed Ali Imam to the Viceroy has received so much booming at the hands of a section of the Anglo-Indian Press that it is necessary to examine a little closely into the arguments used by the League in bolstering up its claims. We may in the first place say that we sympathise with the desire of the Moslem League to secure adequate representation for the Moslem community. But we hold with Lords Morley and MacDonnell that adequate presentation is not synonymous with preferential representation and that numerical proportion must be the sole consideration in determining that representation if all risk, misunderstanding and bickerings are to be avoided. With these observations

we may proceed to examine the position taken up by the Moslem League. We find that the League welcomes the general policy of reform contained in the Secretary of State's Despatch. They observe that the measures of popular element introduced to help the administration of the country with the safeguards provided in the despatch will be largely beneficial in fostering the spirit and strengthening the practice of co-operation between the rulers and the ruled. This is indeed very good so far as it goes and no exception can be taken to it. But the memorialists all the same profess to view with 'much dismay and disappointment' the proposed provision of class representation contained in the Secretary of State's scheme and we are told that 'much gloom thus been cast on the community who profess to see the germs of future political trouble for them in its practical working.' Now one may like to examine what are exactly the points which have caused so much dismay and disappointment to the Mahommedan community. Lord Morley's Despatch has observed that 'the Legislative Council should reflect the leading elements of the population at large,' and that 'no system of representation would be satisfactory if it did not provide for the presence in the Councils of sufficient representatives of communities so important as are the Mahommedans and the landed classes.' The Moslem League, we observe, commend these observations and express their opinion that a more statesmanlike treatment of Indian conditions was not possible. What then one wonders, has caused all this disappointment and dismay and cast such a gloom on the memorialists as to make them apprehensive that the entire business contains the germs of much future political trouble for the community. We are told in so many words that it is the scheme of mixed electoral colleges. The Mahommedans contend that mixed electoral would secure neither adequate nor real representation of Moslem interests.

But in arguing their case of separate electoral representation, the League fall into two palpable fallacies. In the first place, the memorial of the League assures the Viceroy that they 'have not the least desire that an iron wall should be raised for ever between the Mahommedans and their Hindu countrymen' and the memorial further averts that 'it will be a satisfaction to them to be associated as much as possible with their non-Moslem countrymen,' provided class representation is conceded. And yet every man possessed of rudimentary commonsense can see that by insisting on separate and class representation it is exactly an iron wall that the League are eager to raise and maintain for ever between themselves and their Hindu countrymen and to speak the truth one fails to see the force of their declaration for cordial co-operation with the Hindus. Then again the League observes in the memorial, 'It may be rightly urged, Your Excellency, that the religious faith of the man who sits in Council is not of any consequence to his constituents but his political creed is.' If that is so, as indeed the League admit to be, we fail to see why the League fight shy of pushing the issue to its logical conclusion and giving the go-by to such shibboleths as class or communal representation.

Indeed the essence of the policy laid down in the Despatch of the Secretary of State is equal opportunities for all. It is fatuous to cloud the essential factor by raising such irrelevant side issues, as the League have done of the peculiar 'social, traditional and religious considerations attaching to the Indian Mahommedans as a community'. Indeed, it is very difficult to understand what is meant by those specious phrases and there is certainly no calculus or criterion to guage or estimate their peculiar worth or weight. Even more illusory are the claims put forward on behalf of the Mussulmans by the League on account of their so-called contribution to the defence of their empire or of the amusing proposition that they are the gate-keepers of India. But the most absurd and mischievous of all their claims is the one put forward by the League's memorial viz. that 'as a community their religious association with the Islamic countries of the world is not without interest to enhance the value of their position in India.' As our Anglo-Indian contemporary, the *Indian Daily News*, rightly remarks if such claims are admitted, how can the British Government deny to the Sikhs, who have contributed so powerfully to the armed strength of the Empire or to the Parsees who have done and are doing so much for the industrial progress what is granted to the Muslim community. And surely, as the *Indian Daily News* observes, the Rajputs, the Jats and the other clans who form an important fraction of the military strength of the British Raj can press their claims with equal justice. The result would be an anomaly, a veritable hotch-potch, which will seriously menace the working of the reform measures.

There is another important fact which is opportunely recalled by the *Indian Daily News* in this connexion. The fact is, men like the late Sir Syed Ahmed had clearly not counteranced the new fangled doctrines that have found favour with those who now claim in season and out of season to speak for the Moslems. Sir Syed Ahmed never contemplated the possibility of the Moslems claiming separate representation or special privileges. The founder of the great seminary of learning at Aligarh declared his profound conviction that 'Mahommedans and Hindus are the two eyes of India'. Injure the one and you injure the other. We should try to become one heart and soul; if united, we can support each other; if not the effect of one against the other will tend to the destruction and downfall of both. Again : 'In the word 'nation' I include both Hindus and Mahommedans, because that is the only meaning which I can attach to it.' But besides being in violation of the aforesaid maxim of Sir Syed Ahmed, the Moslem scheme is unworkable in practice and is opposed, as Mr. R. C. Dutt pointed out, to the whole trend of British policy.

Source : The Tribune, 18 February 1909.

51

AGA KHAN'S VIEWS ON REFORM SCHEME

I hold no less strongly that in framing the new political order of things statesmanship must take account of the wide differences which separate Hindus and Mussulmans at the present time. These differences are not only religious; they are historical and social, racial and physical and in the latter respect, at least, they soon become marked, even in the case of recent converts to the Moslem faith.... I have to admit that fulfilment of the ideal of homogeneity lies in a future so distant that it is quite beyond me to predict the date of its arrival....

I trust his lordship will take an early opportunity of making definite his intimation that he may be willing to concede the principle of an exclusively Mahommedan electorate sending their representatives to an. exclusively Mahommedan electoral college. Unless this modification of the original plan is affected there cannot be a fulfilment of the pledges given to the deputation.... Now is the opportunity for leading Hindus to show a true spirit of patriotism and good will by recognizing that Mahommedan misgivings as to the original scheme are just and reasonable.... By adopting such an attitude they will do far more to lay the foundations of eventual Indian nationality than by clamouring for adhesion to methods which designed no doubt to advance that end, will in reality greatly retard it.

Source : The Times, 15 February 1909.

52

TELEGRAM FROM SECRETARY OF STATE TO MINTO

18 February 1909

I recognise the fact that details of electoral schemes for due representation of Mahommedan and other minorities must be mainly settled by your Government after consultation with local authorities, and I had no wish to insist on universal disallowance of double vote.... It seems to be justifiable in these cases on the ground that special privilege may be given to property and education, but it is obviously undesirable to give the privilege of double vote to adherents of any particular religion merely as such. But I regard it

as essential that schemes shall be such as to satisfy all reasonable claims and expectations of Mahommedans, and I am not likely to refuse sanction to any proposals...which clearly fulfils this condition and which is otherwise workable and fair.

Source : Minto Papers : Telegraphic Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1909.

53

MORLEY'S SPEECH ON THE SECOND READING OF INDIAN COUNCIL BILL

23 February 1909

I invite the House to take to-day the first definite and operative step in carrying out the policy that I had the honour of describing to your Lordship just before Christmas, and that has occupied the active consideration both of the Home Government and of the Government of India for very nearly three years. The statement was awaited in India with an expectancy that with time became impatience, and it was receive in India—and that, after all, is the point to which I looked with the most anxiety—with intense interest and attention and various degrees of approval, from warm enthusiasm to cool assent and acquiescence.

A few days after the arrival of my despatch, a deputation waited upon the Viceroy unique in its comprehensive character. Both Hindus and Mahommedans were represented; and they waited upon the Viceroy to offer warm expressions of gratitude for the scheme that was unfolded before them. A few days later at Madras the Congress met; they, too, expressed their thanks to the Home Government and to the Government of India. The Moslem League met at Amritsar; they were warm in their approval of the policy which they took to be foreshadowed in the despatch, though they found fault with the defects they thought they had discovered in the scheme, and implored the Government, both in India and here, to remedy those defects. So far as I know and I do beg your Lordships to note these details of the reception of our policy in India—there has been no sign in any quarter, save in the irreconcilable camp, of anything like organised hostile opinion among either Indians or Anglo-Indians.

The Indian Civil Service I will speak of very shortly. I will pass them by for the moment. Lord Lansdowne said truly the other night that when I spoke

at the end of December, I used the words 'formidable and obscure' as describing the situation, and he desired to know whether I thought the situation was still obscure and formidable. I will not abandon the words, but I think the situation is less formidable and less obscure. Neither repression on the one hand, nor reform on the other, could possibly be expected to cut the roots of anarchical crime in a few weeks. But with unfaltering repression on the one hand, and vigour and good faith in reform on the other, we see solid reason to hope that we shall weaken, even if we can destroy, those baleful forces.

There are, I take it, three classes of people that we have to consider in dealing with a scheme of this kind. There are the extremists, who nurse fantastic dreams that some day they will drive us out of India. In this group there are academic extremists and physical force extremists, and I have seen it stated on a certain authority—it cannot be more than a guess—that they do not number, whether academic or physical force extremists, more than one-tenth, or even three per cent, of what are called the educated class in India. The second group nourish no hopes of this sort; they hope for autonomy or self-government of the colonial species and pattern. The third section in this classification ask for no more than to be admitted to co-operation in our administration, and to find a free and effective voice in expressing the interests and needs of their people. I believe the effect of the reforms has been, is being, and will be, to draw the second class, who hope for colonial autonomy, into the ranks of the third class, who will be content with admission to a fair and workable co-operation. A correspondent wrote to me the other day and said :

'We seem to have caught many discontented people on the rebound, and to have given them an excuse for a loyalty which they have badly wanted.'

In spite of all this, it is a difficult and critical situation. Still, by almost universal admission it has lost the tension that strained India two or three months ago, and public feeling is tranquillised, certainly beyond any expectation that either I or the Viceroy ventured to entertain.

The atmosphere has changed from dark and sullen to hopeful, and I am sure your Lordship will allow me to be equally confident that nothing will be done at Westminster to overcloud that promising sky. The noble Marquess the other day said—and I was delighted to hear it—that he, at all event, would give us, with all the reservations that examination of the scheme might demand from him, a whole-hearted support here, and his best encouragement to the men in India. I accept that, and I lean upon it, because if anything was done at Westminster, either by delay or otherwise, to show a breach in what ought to be the substantial unity of Parliamentary opinion in face of the Indian situation, it would be a marked disaster. I would venture on the point of delay to say this. Your Lordship will not suspect me of having any desire to hurry the Bill, but I remember that when Lord Cross brought in the Bill of 1892 Lord Kimberley, so well known and so popular in this House, used

language which I venture to borrow from him, and to press upon your Lordships to-day.

'I think it almost dangerous to leave a subject of this kind hung up to be perpetually discussed by all manner of persons, and, having once allowed that, at all events, some amendment is necessary in regard to the mode of constituting the Legislative Councils, it is incumbent upon the Government and Parliament to pass the Bill which they may think expedient as speedily as possible into law.'

Considerations of social order and social urgency in India make that just as useful to be remembered to-day, as it was useful then.

The noble Marquess the other day, in a very courteous manner, administered to me an exhortation and an admonition—I had almost said a lecture—as to the propriety of deferring to the man on the spot, and the danger of quarrelling with the man on the spot. I listened with becoming meekness and humility, but then it occurred to me that the language of the noble Marquess was not original. Those noble Lords who share the Bench with him, gave deep murmurs of approval to the homily that was administered to me. They forgot that they once had a man on the spot, the man then being that eminent and distinguished personage whom I may be allowed to congratulate upon his restoration to health and to his place in this Assembly. He said this, which the noble Marquess will see is a fair original for his own little discourse; it was said after the noble Lord had thrown up the reins :

'What I wish to say to high officers of State and members of Government is this, as far as you can trust the man on the spot. Do not weary or fret or nag him with your superior wisdom. They claim no immunity from errors of opinion or judgment, but their errors are nothing compared with yours.'

The remonstrance, therefore, of Lord Curzon, addressed to the noble Lords sitting near him, is identical with the warning which I have laid to heart from the noble Marquess.

The House will pardon me if for a moment I dwell upon what by application is an innuendo conveyed in the admonition of the noble Marquess. I have a suspicion that he considered his advise was needed; he expressed the hope that all who were responsible for administration in India would have all the power for which they had a right to ask. Upon that I can—though I am half reluctant to do it—completely clear my character. In December last, shortly before I addressed your Lordships, Lord Minto, having observed there was some talk of my interference with him and his Council, telegraphed these words, and desired that I should make use of them whenever I thought fit :

'I hope you will say from me in as strong language as you may choose to use, that in all our dealings with sedition I could not be more strongly supported than I have been by you. The question of the control of Indian administration by the Secretary of State, mixed up as it is with the old difficulties of centralisation, we may very possibly look at from different point

of view. But that has nothing to do with the support the Secretary of State gives to the Viceroy, and which you have given to me in a time of great difficulty, and for which I shall always be warmly grateful.'

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE

I think the noble Viscount will see from the report of my speech, that the part he has quoted had reference to measures of repression, and that what I said was that justice should be prompt, that it was undesirable that there should be appeals from one Court to another, or from provincial Governments to the Government in Calcutta, or from the Government at Calcutta to the Secretary of State for India. I did not mean to imply merely the Viceroy, but the men responsible for local government.

VISCOUNT MORLEY

I do not think that when the noble Marquess refers to the report of his speech he will find I have misrepresented him. At all event, he will, I do believe, gladly agree that, in dealing with sedition, I have on the whole given all the support the Government of India or anybody else concerned had a right to ask for.

I will now say a word about the Indian Civil Service. Three years ago, when we began these operations, I felt that a vital condition of success was that we should carry the Indian Civil Service with us, and that if we did not do this, we should fail. But human nature being what it is, and temperaments varying as they do, it is natural to expect a certain amount of criticism, minute criticism, and observation, I have had that, but will content myself with one quotation from the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, well known to the noble Lord opposite. What did he say, addressing the Legislative Council a few weeks ago ?

'I hold that a solemn duty rests upon the officers of Government in all branches, and more particularly upon the officers of the Civil Service, so to comfort themselves in the conception and working of the new measures as to make the task of the people and their leaders easy. It is incumbent upon them loyally to accept the principle that these measures involve the surrender of some portion of the authority and control which they now exercise, and some modifications of the methods of administration. If that task is approached in a grudging or reluctant spirit, we shall be sowing the seeds of failure, and shall forfeit our claim to receive the friendly cooperation of the representatives of the people. We must be prepared to support, defend, and carry through the administrative policy, and in a certain degree even the executive acts of the Government in the Council, in much the same way as is now prescribed in regard to measures of legislation; and we must further be prepared to discharge this task without the aid of a standing majority behind us. We will have to resort to the more difficult arts of persuation and conciliation, in the place of the easier methods of autocracy. This is no

small demand to make on the resources of a service whose training and traditions have hitherto led its members rather to work for the people, then through the people or their representatives. But I am nevertheless confident that the demand will not be made in vain. For more than a hundred years, in the time of the Company and under the rule of the Crown, the Indian Civil Service has never failed to respond to whatever call has been made upon it or to adapt itself to the changing environment of the time. I feel no doubt that officers will be found who possess the natural gifts, the loyalty; the imagination, and the force of character which will be requisite for the conduct of the administration under the more advanced form of Government to which we are about to succeed.'

These words I commend to your Lordships. They breathe a fine and high spirit; they admirably express the feeling of a sincere man; and I do not believe anybody who is acquainted with the Service doubts that this spirit, so admirably expressed, will pervade the Service in the admittedly difficult task that now confronts them.

The Bill is a short one, and will speak for itself. I shall be brief in referring to it, for in December last I made what was practically a Second-Reading speech. I may point out that there are two rival schools, and that the noble Lord opposite (Lord Curzon) may be said to represent one of them. There are two rival schools, one of which believes that better Government of India depends on efficiency, and that efficiency is in fact the main end of our rule in India. The other school, while not neglecting efficiency, looks also to what is called political concession, I think I am doing the noble Lord no injustice in saying that, during his remarkable Viceroyalty, he did not accept the necessity for political concession, but trusted to efficiency. I hope it will not be bad taste to say in the noble Lords' presence, that you will never send to India, and you have never sent to India, a Viceroy his superior, if, indeed, his equal, in force of mind, in unsparing and remorseless industry, in passionate and devoted interest in all that concerns the well-being of India with an imagination fired by the grandeur of the political problem that India presents—you never sent a man with more of all these attributes than when you send Lord Curzon. But splendidly designed as was his work from the point of view of efficiency, he still left in India a state of things, when we look back upon it, that could not be held a satisfactory crowning of a brilliant and ambitious career.

I am as much for efficiency as the noble Lord, but I do not believe—and this is the difference between him and myself—that you can now have true, solid, endurable efficiency without what are called political concessions. I know the risks. The late Lord Salisbury, speaking on the last Indian Councils Bill, spoke of the risk of applying occidental machinery in India. Well, we ought to have thought of that before we applied occidental education; we applied that, and a measure of occidental machinery must follow. Legislative Councils once called into existence, than it was inevitable

that you would have gradually, in Lord Salisbury's own phrase, to popularise them, so as to bring them into harmony with the dominant sentiments of the people in India. The Bill of 1892 admittedly contained the elective principle, and our Bill to-day extends that principle. The noble Lord (Viscount Cross) will remember the Bill of 1892, of which he had charge in the House of Commons. I want the House to be good enough to follow the line taken by Mr. Gladstone, because I base myself on that. There was an amendment moved and it was going to a division, But Mr. Gladstone begged his friends not to divide, because, he said, it was very important that we should present a substantial unity to India. This is upon the question of either House considering a Bill like the Bill that is now on the Table—a mere skeleton of a Bill if you like. I see it has been called vague and sketchy. It cannot be anything else, on the board principle set out by Mr. Gladstone—

'It is the intention of the Government (that is, the Conservative Government) that a serious effort shall be made to consider carefully those elements which India in its present condition may furnish, for the introduction into the Councils of India of the elective principle. If that effort is seriously to be made, by whom is it to be made ? I do not think it can be made by this House, except through the medium of empowering provisions. The best course we could take would be to commend to the authorities of India what is a clear indication of the principles on which we desire them to proceed. It is not our business to devise machinery for the purpose of Indian Government. It is our business to give to those who represent Her Majesty in India ample information as to what we believe to be sound principles of Government; and it is, of course, the function of this House to comment upon any case in which we may think they have failed to give due effect to those principles.'

I only allude to Mr. Gladstone's words, in order to let the House know that I am taking no unusual course in leaving the bulk of the work, the details of the work, to the Government of India. Discussion, therefore, in Parliament will necessarily not, and cannot, turn substantially upon details. But no doubt it is desirable that the main heads of the regulations, rules, and proclamations to be made by the Government of India under sanction of the India Office, should be more or less placed within the reach and knowledge of the House so far as they are complete. The principles of the bill are in the Bill, and will be affirmed, if your Lordships are placed to read it a second time. The Committee points, important as they are, can well be dealt with in Committee. The view of Mr. Gladstone was cheerfully accepted by the House of Commons then, and I hope it will be accepted by your Lordship to-day.

There is one very important chapter in these regulations, which I think now on the Second Reading of the Bill, without waiting for Committee, I ought to say a few words to your Lordship about, I mean the Mahommedans,

That is a part of the Bill and scheme that has no doubt attracted a great deal of criticism, and excited a great deal of feeling in that important community. We suggested to the Government of India a certain plan. We did not prescribe it, we did not order it, but we suggested and recommended this plan for their consideration—no more than that. It was the plan of a mixed or composite Electoral College, in which Mahommedans and Hindus should pool their votes, so to say. The wording of the recommendation in my despatch was, as I soon discovered, ambiguous—a grievous defect, of which I make bold to hope I am not very often in public business guilty. But to the best of my belief, under any construction the plan of Hindus and Mahommedans voting together, in a mixed and composite electorate, would have secured to the Mahommedan electors, wherever they were so minded, the chance of returning their own representative in their due proportion. The political idea at the bottom of this recommendation, which has found so little favour, was that such composite action would bring the two great communities more closely together and this hope of promoting harmony was held by men of high Indian authority and experience who were among my advisers at the India Office. But the Mahommedans protested that the Hindus would elect a pro-Hindu upon it, just as I suppose in a mixed college of say seventy-five Catholics and twenty-five Protestants voting together, the Protestants might suspect that the Catholics voting for the Protestant would choose what is called a Romanising Protestant, and as a little of a Protestant, as they could find. Suppose the other way, in Ireland there is an expression, a 'shoneen'—that is to say, a Catholic who, though a Catholic, is too friendly with English Conservatism and other influences which the Nationalists dislike. And it might be said, if there were seventy-five Protestants against twenty-five Catholics, that the Protestants when giving a vote in the way of Catholic representation, would return 'shoneens'. I am not going to take Your Lordship's time up by arguing this to-day. With regard to schemes of proportional representation, as Calvin said of another study, 'Excessive study of the Apocalypse either finds a man mad, or makes him so.' At any rate, the Government of India doubted whether our plan would work, and we have abandoned it. I do not think it was a bad plan, but it is no use, if you are making an earnest attempt in good faith at a general pacification, to let parental fondness for a clause interrupt that good process by sitting obstinately tight.

The Mahommedans demand three things. I had the pleasure of receiving a deputation from them, and I know very well that is in their minds. They demand the election of their own representatives to these councils in all the stages, just as in Cyprus, where I think, the Mahommedans vote by themselves. They have nine votes and the non-Mahommedans have three or the other way about. So in Bohemia, where the Germans vote alone and have their own register. Therefore we are not without a precedent and a parallel, for the idea of a separate register. Secondly, they want a number

of seats somewhat in excess of their numerical strength. Those two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet in full. There is a third demand that, if there is a Hindu on the Viceroy's Executive Council—a subject on which I will venture to say something to your Lordships before I sit down—there should be two Indian members on the Viceroy's Council and one should be a Mahommedan. Well, as I told them and as I now tell your Lordships, I see no chance whatever of meeting their views in that way.

To go back to the point of the registers, some may be shocked at the idea of a religious register at all, a register framed on the principle of religious belief. We may wish—we do wish—that it were otherwise. We hope that time, with careful and impartial statesmanship, will make things otherwise. Only let us now forget that the difference between Mahommedanism and Hinduism is not a mere difference of articles of religious faith or dogma. It is a difference in life, in tradition, in history, in all the social things as well as articles of belief, that constitute a community. Do not let us forget what makes it interesting and even exciting. Do not let us forget that, in talking of Hindus and Mahommedans, we are dealing with, and are brought face to face with, vast historic issues. We are dealing with the very mightiest forces that through all the centuries and ages have moulded the fortunes of great states and the destinies of countless millions of mankind. Thoughts of that kind, my Lords, are what give to Indian politics and to Indian work extraordinary fascination, though at the same time they impose the weight of an extraordinary burden.

I come to the question which, I think, has excited, certainly in this country, more interest than anything else in the scheme before you—I mean the question of an Indian member on the Viceroy's Executive Council. The noble Marquess said here the other day that he hoped an opportunity would be given for discussing it. Whether it is in order or not—I am too little aversed in your Lordships' procedure to be quite sure but I am told that the rules of order in this House are of an elastic description and that I shall not be trespassing beyond what is right, if I introduce the point to night. I thoroughly understand Lord Lansdowne's anxiety for a chance of discussion. It is quite true, and the House should not forget it, that this question is in no way whatever touched by the Bill. If this Bill were rejected by Parliament, it would be grievous disaster to peace and contentment in India, but it would not prevent the Secretary of State the very next morning from advising His Majesty to appoint an Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive Council.

The noble Marquess the other day fell into a slight error, if he will forgive me for saying so. He said that the Government of India had used cautious and tentative words, indicating that it would be premature to decide at once this question of the Indian member untill after further experience had been gained. I think the noble Marquess must have lost his way in the mazes of that enormous Blue-Book which, as he told us, caused him so much inconvenience, and added so much to his excess luggage during

the Christmas holidays. The despatch, as far as I can discover, is silent altogether on the topic of the Indian member of the Viceroy's Council, and deals only with the Councils of Bombay and Madras and the proposed Councils for the Lieutenant-Governorships.

Perhaps I might be allowed to remind your Lordships of the Act of 1833—certainly the most extensive and important measure of Indian government between Mr. Pitt's famous Act of 1784, and Queen Victoria's assumption of the government of India in 1858. There is nothing more important than that Act. It lays down in the broadest way possible the desire of Parliament that there should be no difference in appointing to offices in India between one race and another, and the covering despatch written by that memorable man, James Mill, wound up by saying that—

'For the future, fitness is to be the criterion of eligibility.'

I need not quote the famous paragrah in the Queen's Proclamation of 1858. Every Member of the House who takes an interest in India, knows that by heart. Now, the noble Marquess says that his anxiety is that nothing shall be done to impair the efficiency of the Viceroy's Council. I share that anxiety with all my heart. I hope the noble Marquess will do me the justice to remember that in these plans I have gone beyond the Government of India, is resolving that a permanent official majority shall remain in the Viceroy's. Lord MacDonnel said the other day :

'I believe you cannot find any individual native gentleman who is enjoying general confidence, who would be able to give advice and assistance to the Governor-General in Council.'

Well, for that matter, it has been my lot twice to fill the not very exhilarating post of Chief Secretary for Ireland, and I do not believe I can truly say I ever met in Ireland a single individual native gentleman who 'enjoyed general confidence'. And yet I received at Dublin Castle most excellent and competent advice. Therefore I am not much impressed by that argument. The question is whether there is no one of the 300 millions of the population of India, who is competent to be the officially constituted adviser of the Governor-General in Council in the administration of Indian affairs. You make an Indian a judge of the High Court, and Indians have even been acting Chief Justices. As to capacity, who can deny that they have distinguished themselves as administrators of native States, where a very full demand is made on their resources, intellectual and moral ? It is said that the presence of an Indian member would cause restraint in the language of discussion. For a year and a half we have had two Indians on the Council of India, and we have none of us ever found the slightest restraint.

Then there is the question, what are you going to do about the Hindu and the Mahommedan ? When Indians were first admitted to the High Courts, for a long time the Hindus were more fit and competent than the Mahommedans; but now I am told the Mahommedans have their full share. The same sort of operation would go on in quinquennial period in respect

of the Viceroy's Council. Opinion amongst the great Anglo-Indian officers now at home is divided, but I know at least one, not at all behind Lord MacDonnell in experience or mental grasp, who is strongly in favour of this proposal. One circumstance that cannot but strike your Lordships as remarkable, is the comparative absence of hostile criticism of this idea by the Anglo-Indian Press, and, as I am told, in Calcutta society. I was apprehensive at one time that it might be otherwise. I should like to give a concrete illustration of my case. The noble Marquess opposite said the other day that there was going to be a vacancy in one of the posts on the Viceroy's Excutive Council—that is, the legal member's time would soon be up. Now, suppose there were in Calcutta an Indian lawyer of large practice and great experience in his profession—a man of unstained professional and personal repute, in close touch with European society, and much respected, and the actual holder of important legal office. Am I to say to this man—'In spite of all these excellent circumstances to your credit; in spite of the emphatic declaration of 1833 that fitness is undisputed, fitness is to be the criterion of eligibility; in spite of the noble promise in Queen Victoria's proclamation of 1858—a promise of which every Englishman ought to be for ever proud if he tries to adhere to it, and ashamed if he tries to betray or to mock it—in spite of all this, usage and prejudice are so strong, that I dare now appoint you, but must instead fish up a stranger to India from Lincoln's Inn or the Temple ?' Is there one of your Lordships who would envy the Secretary of State, who had to hold language of that kind to a meritorious candidate, one of the King's equal subjects ? I press it on your Lordships in that concrete way. Abstract general arguments are slippery. I do not say that there is no force in them, but there are deeper questions at issue to which both I and the Governor-General attach the greatest importance. My Lords, I thank you for your attention, and I beg to move the second readings.

Source : Viscount Morley, *Indian Speeches*, London, 1909.

54

LETTER FROM THE 'TRUTH' PIONEER'S CORRESPONDENT ON REFORM

The 1st March has witnessed the election of a member for the Provincial Council by the Municipal Boards. There were twenty-three electors—thirteen Hindus, eight Mahommedans and two Christians and two candidates, Moulvi Abdul Majid, Barrister, Taluqadar of Jaunpur, and

Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya, Vakil, High Court, for the seat. Both these gentlemen are well known in these Provinces, and were fit representatives of their respective communities. But one could have easily foreseen the result, for the electors representing one of the communities named above outnumbered by three the electors belonging to the other two communities put together, and not unnaturally the Hindu candidate carried the election by 13 votes to 9. The Mahommedan candidate, fully supported, as he was by his co-religionist electors and carrying also a Christian vote in his favour, was out voted. Herein is furnished a complete illustration of the only too true fact that whenever any question is to be decided on the basis of a majority of votes the Mahommedans will have no chance whatever.

One 'Gunter' in his letter to editor replied. He wrote :

(1) It is not safe to generalise from one single instance. There have been occasions in these very provinces when the Hindus have voted for the Mahommedans. When the elective principle first came into operation, in 1893 I think, the name of Mr. Hamid Ali Khan of Lucknow was proposed by a Hindu gentleman from Fyzabad, and that too against a Hindu candidate, viz., Rai Sri Ram Bahadur. Again Nawab Fayyaz Ali Khan of Pahasu was elected to the Viceregal Council by the votes of the Hindu members of the Provincial Council. During the last election, Hindu members of the Provincial Council voted for the Raja of Mahmudabad, and elected him as their representative in the Viceregal Council.

(2) Comparisons are no doubt obious, but when two candidates offer themselves for election to the Legislative Council, it is not out of place to compare their records of public service. Mr. Malaviya had been working nobly and unselfishly for the public during the last twenty years and more the services of Mr. Abdul Majid, even to his own community still 'lie hidden in the womb of futurity.'

(3) Even supposing for the sake of argument that the Hindus voted for their man simply because he was a Hindu, what right have the Mahommedans to grumble ? Have they not been proclaiming from the house top that their interests are separate from—those of the Hindus and have they not been asking for the gatekeeper's bakshish on that very account ? What wonder then if the Hindus are driven to adopt a separatist attitude in their self-defence ?

Source: The Pioneer, 4 and 24 March 1909.

55

LETTER FROM MORLEY TO MINTO

5 March 1909

Curzon... is characteristically active... he hates the Bill and the whole policy of which the Bill is the instrument. But they did not dare to take the responsibility of throwing it out, and so they have to content with attempts to nag and whittle it away. His arguments, however, all of them rest on the view that the whole attempt is a blunder, and that we ought to have persisted in his policy of shutting eyes and ears to all 'political concession' whatever. Brodrick is excellent, could not be fairer or more helpful. Ampthill, an enthusiastic supporter. Wenlock not friendly to the Bill but kind and moderate. Harris talked in an absurd vein, but it seemed to suit the House of Lords, Northcote doubtful, but without any approach to acrimony. Sandhurst, a conscientious opponent, but he allowed his conscience to carry him too far, when it took him into the enemy's lobby. On the whole, excepting Reay, the presidential ex-governors cut a somewhat sorry figure.

Source : Minto Papers : Letters from the Secretary of State for India, 1909.

56

LETTER FROM AMEER ALI TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES ON THE MUSLIMS AND INDIAN REFORMS

Does not your Special Correspondent's telegram today, in which he says : 'Nevertheless, here as in the United Provinces, the high officials are expressing some alarm lest a too strenuous advocacy of Muslim claims may produce an undue exaltation in the minds of Muslims, which would not be desirable'; rather point to a condition of nerves in high official quarters ?

The concessions that have been made to the just and moderate representations of the Muslims are not such as are likely to give them swollen heads. Friends and foes alike admit that they have urged their claims in a spirit of moderation and reserve; and I can say without hesitation that my people are not suffering from any 'undue exaltation' over what they consider as vital to their political existence. The prevailing feeling is rather one of depression at the general outlook.

'Undue exaltation' on the part of any community in India is certainly to be deprecated, and 'high officials' will be doing a service to the Empire if they endeavour to apply that principle generally.

Source: *The Times*, 8 March 1909.

57

LETTER FROM MUSHIR HOSAIN KIDWAI TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING THE SEPARATE REPRESENTATION

Allow me to point out, for the consideration of my co-religionists, the following defects in the system of separate communal electorate—(1) The principle of separation is in itself demoralising and out of date. Even the constitution-makers of extremely heterogenous Turkish Empire have avoided it. (2) The system introduces religious considerations in political matters. (3) The very announcement of it has strained the tension between Hindus and Mussulmans and has infuriated the former. (4) It will prove fatal to the interests of the general Muslim public as it will tend to array against the Muslim minority a non-Muslim majority bent on revenging the policy of separation introduced by certain Muslims. In District and Municipal Boards where there will be no official party to take sides with the Muslim minority at the time of their need, the 'separate Muslim interests' will go to the wall. (5) It will put the official party in the Councils in a false position and its agreement with any community will always be misunderstood. (6) It will be injurious to the best interests of the country because the communal interests will be made to predominate, by each separate community, the general interests of the country. (7) It will make the Council work in harmonious as the backward representatives of backward communities will sit with the progressive representatives of progressive communities and the religious bigots of one community will face those of the other. (8) It will perpetuate the backwardness of the backward communities as their representatives in order to keep their representative character undiminished will have to keep themselves on the level of their backward constituents. (9) It will retard the progress of nationalism and unification in India. (10) It will encourage sectarianism in separate communities themselves. (11) As the population of India is very disproportionately inter-mixed, the formation of separate communal electorate will be very difficult. (12) The watchword of present day Mussulmans of the world is 'Union and Progress' and separatism is against the spirit of Pan-Islamism as understood by.

Source: The Pioneer, 24 March 1909.

58

THE TRIBUNE ON SEPARATE ELECTORATES AND MAHOMMEDAN OPINION

We have more than once had occasion to state in these columns that public opinion among educated and intelligent Mahommedans in this country on the subject of separate electorates for Hindus and Mahommedans by no means inclines towards the views which have been passed on Lord Morley by the Muslim League or rather by certain members of it who both here and in England offer to speak in the name of the Mahommedan community. Our impression has been greatly strengthened by the appearance in the Pioneer of a letter on the subject under the signature of Mr. Mushir Hosain Kidwai, who is a leading member of the Mahommedan community of Lucknow, and was educated in England. Mr. Kidwai who is held in high esteem by his countrymen and is a leading member of the Muslim League speaks with no uncertain voice regarding the fatal step that we fear is about to be taken by Government in conceding the unreasonable demand for separate electorates. He is quite right in stating that 'the principle of separation is in itself demoralising and out of date', and he points out that 'even the constitution makers of extremely heterogenous Turkish Empire have avoided it.' He rightly objects to the system because 'It introduces religious considerations in political matters.' He has fully grasped the absurdity of the situation when he says 'that the very announcement of it has strained the tension between Hindus and Mahommedans and has infuriated the former.' Infuriated of course is not the word that could appropriately be used in this connection. But there can hardly be any doubt that the announcement has made worse relations which were hardly satisfactory before. Mr. Kidwai observes that 'It will prove fatal to the interests of the general Muslim public as it will tend to array against the Muslim minority a non-Muslim majority bent on revenging the policy of separatism introduced by certain Muslims. In District and Municipal Boards where there will be no official party to take sides with the Muslim minority at the time of their need, the separate Muslim interests will go to the wall.' Mr. Kidwai makes out a very strong case indeed in support of the position that he has taken up when he says that 'it will put the official party in the Council in the false position and its agreement with any party will always be misunderstood.' In other words the official party in the Councils will always be charged with a desire to encourage the policy of divide and conquer. Mr. Kidwai takes a very sound view of the case when he maintains that it will be injurious to the best interests of the country because the communal interests will be made to predominate by each separate community the general interests of the country. And these interests will undoubtedly suffer. He is further quite right when he says that 'it will make the Council work in harmonious as the back-

ward representatives of backward communities will sit with the progressive representatives of progressive communities and the religious bigots of one community will face those of the other.' And no one can say that it will be in any way an edifying spectacle. Mr. Kidwai displays an insight of a really acute kind when he holds that 'it will perpetuate the backwardness of the backward communities; as their representatives in order to keep their representative character undiminished will have to keep themselves on the level of their backward constituents'. He is further quite right that 'it will retard the progress of nationalism and unification in India.' Mr. Kidwai might well have gone a bit further and added that it will make that progress quite impossible. To the Mahommedans themselves the arrangement will prove highly injurious. As Mr. Kidwai very appropriately says, 'it will encourage secretarianism in separate communities themselves.' He says, further that 'as the population of India is very disproportionately intermixed, the formation of separate communal electorates will be very difficult, and that the watchword of present day Mussulmans of the world is 'Union and Progress', and separatism is against the spirit of Pan-Islamism.' The very sound position taken up by this enlightened Mahommedan critic briefly speaking amounts to this. The arrangement of separate electorates based on considerations of religion and creed will be not only most harmful to the best interests of the country, but that it will also do the Mahommedan interests an incalculable amount of harm. The arrangement will be impracticable and will, if carried out, put heavy and almost insurmountable obstacles in the way of Indian unity and progress. What Mr. Kidwai has written with so much cogency and force deserves the serious attention of our Mahommedan fellow countrymen of all classes. Lord Morley himself is opposed to the idea of separate electorates, but he has yielded because he has been given to understand that the arrangement in question is desired by the Mahommedan. If patriotic and enlightened Mahommedan gentlemen like Mr. Mushir Hosain Kidwai who are the true and sincere well-wishers of their community can succeed in making it clear that the Mahommedans as a community are not anxious to have separate electorates, the calamity threatened may still be averted. Let them exert themselves and show the Government that their community does not want separate electorates based on considerations relating to caste and creed and good is bound to come out of the agitation that may be got up in this connection. All over India there are Mahommedans who feel on the subject as keenly and strongly as Mr. Kidwai. They have only to join hands and to co-operate together and success will crown their efforts to avert what they are quite right in regarding as an evil of no small magnitude to the progress of the country.

Source : The Tribune, 28 March 1909.

59

NAWAB SALIMULLAH ON MAHOMMEDAN REPRESENTATION
18 April 1909

If this proposal *i.e.* that a few seats should be given to the Mahommedans communally and for further representation, they should take their chance with the Hindus is adopted, no Mahommedan, I am afraid, will ever get in under the second method, and the Mussulman representation will, in practice, become restricted to the few seats specially assigned to them communally. In other words the minimum representation will become the maximum and the whole thing will become a farce. Gentlemen, you will therefore see how essential it is for our community to insist that the Government should take steps to have a separate register for Mahommedan elections, and separate electorates for the election of Mahommedan representatives from top to bottom, and that the number of Mahommedan representatives should be fixed by the executive authority on considerations of policy, local conditions etc. as we have repeatedly urged. It is essential, therefore, that we should elect our representatives absolutely separate for all purposes and that our representation should be substantial.

Source : Morley Papers : India Question of Mahommedan Representation.

60

LETTER FROM MINTO TO MORLEY
29 April 1909

To put it vulgarly, the Mahommedans appear to have 'got hold of the wrong end of the stick'. There is evidently some misunderstanding on their part...I don't think the difficulty will amount to much, but if necessary I will ask some recognised Mahommedan leaders to meet me and talk the question over. They certainly are not all of one opinion as to general or special electorate, or nomination, and whilst recognising the necessity for special representation in their case, I cannot see that we have ever pledged ourselves that there should be no such thing as a general electorate upon which Mahommedan should vote.

Source : Minto Papers : Letters to the Secretary of State for India, 1909.

61

LETTER FROM SYED ALI IMAM TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER ON THE INDIA COUNCILS BILL, REGARDING THE MOSLEM REPRESENTATION

Since I attended the sitting of the Bihar Provincial Conference the other day at Bhagalpore my attention has been drawn to a leading article in the *Observer* in which that paper was given serious attention to the consequences that should result from my participation in the proceedings of that gathering. Journalistic virulence is not generally successful in arresting my attention, and in this particular instance after I read the article in question, I had no intention of according it any exceptional treatment. Since its perusal, however, I have had letters and telegrams from leaders from various parts of India requesting me to remove misconception that the hasty pronouncement of the *Observer* has engendered. I accordingly proceed to do so and request you to favour me with giving publication to what I have to say in this connection.

The question on which there is some agreement of views between Mr. Gokhale and myself is the character of separation between the two communities, Hindus and Mahommedans, in the matter of election to the Councils under the proposed Reforms. Three main divisions of views are logically possible on this point, each division having in its turn differences of details and shades of variance that may be important but cannot affect the issues in principle. The three divisions are formed of Extreme Separatists, Moderate Separatists and Non-Separatists. Extreme Separatists are those that insist on absolute isolation and desire to raise an iron wall between the Mahommedans and non-Mahommedans of India. Moderate Separatists are those that recognise the justice and fairness of giving so important a minority as the Mahommedans are full and adequate representation by the creation of special Mahommedan electorates and at the same time have the political sagacity to maintain their co-operation and participation in the elections by general electorates. Non-Separatists are those that will not tolerate any class representation by separate electorate at all of any kind whatsoever. These are the three main divisions that the controversy over the question of class representation has some what sharply defined.

I may say at the very outset that I have nothing in common with the Non-Separatist. To my mind he has not understood the needs of our country and is hopelessly wedded to maxims without any appreciation of modifying circumstances that so largely vary conditions of the application of principles. He is too abstract and shuts his eyes to stern realities that will not bend to his philosophic abstraction. He forgets that the Mahommedans of India are a distinct community with distinct religious, social and racial

characteristics of their own, and that in a country like India that is only an infant in matters of representative institutions, unfortunately election is too often subordinated to communal consideration rather than to political discrimination of the merits or demerits of individual candidates. I hold to the view that without the reservation of full and adequate number of seats for the Mussulman in the Councils, full and adequate both on grounds of numerical test and their political importance, the proposed reforms will result in deep dissatisfaction among the Mahommedans, will engender in them feelings of dire hostility to and heart-burning against the permanent and everlasting Hindu majority will create in their mind profound distrust of British statesmenship and will rudely shake the implicit faith the Mussulmans have so long placed in the care and solicitude of British Government.... Let all communities advance affording them facilities according to their needs and requirements, and do not, in heaven's name allow an all-powerful majority to over shadow and dwarf the growth of a hopless minority. The aspiration of the All-India Moslem League, as given expression to by me at Amritsar, is 'United India' and this I am convinced is not possible without recognising the wisdom of preferential treatment where such treatment is a necessity in the interest of the general good of India. I have said before and I repeat that dissatisfied Muslims in India will be no small drag on the wheel of national progress and the only way to kindle territorial patriotism in them, the only way to wean them away from Pan-Islamic attractions and the only way to inspire them with Indian nationalism is for the insular, stay-at-home and indigenous community, the Hindus, to bind their Mahommedan countrymen with ties of confidence and obligation which is impossible without extending to the Mussulmans liberal treatment and generous concessions. In the name of India the Hindus must embark upon a course of courageous conciliation and in the sacred name of the land of their birth the Mahommedans should respond by lessening the rigidity of their sectarianism. Political readjustment of the relations of the two communities alone can save them from the perils of years and years, possibly of generations of bitterly suicidal strife that the present outlook only too palpably fore shadows. From all this the Non-Separatist has to take a lesson. But what of the Extreme-Separatist? He who wants complete isolation and the iron wall? I have no hesitation in saying that he strikes no less a fatal blow at Indian nationalism than the Non-Separatist. They are poles asunder yet close comrades in destruction. There is, however, a difference in method and that is that while the Non-Separatist kills Indian nationalism just as ruthlessly as the other he subserves sectarian gain for the Hindu majority and secures for it an aggressive over-lordship keeping the Indian Mussulmans under an everlasting political tutelage. On the other hand the Extreme-Separatist puts himself out of touch with the political activity of the majority of his countrymen, deprives himself of participation in the opportunities the 'awakening', referred to by Lord Morley in the Indian

Civil Service dinner speech, is creating and will go on creating in this country, and retires within the crabbed existence of political isolation. The Extreme Separatist destroys Indian nationalism too, but he does far worse. He at the same time presents the poisoned chalice to his own lips.

I hope I shall not be misunderstood. I do not for a moment discount the vital importance of securing full and adequate Moslem representation by separate Mahommedan electorate but as a Moderate Separatist I value the political necessity of all communities participating in the elections by general electorates. There may be force in the contention that such participation will not probably result in return of Mahommedan members and that under very exceptional circumstances the Mahommedan candidate may possess a slender chance of successful election and that even this perhaps on his subscribing to the views of the majority of the electors who will be necessarily Hindus. It may be urged that even in the East Bengal and the Punjab where the Mahommedans are in numerical majority the chances of their return are problematical in as much as other factors—education, wealth and organisation—have Hindu preponderance as they have all over India. It may then be asked why I favour co-operation which the uncertainties of securing seats for Mahommedans through election by general electorate are obvious? As to this while I fully admit the difficulties of the Mahommedan position I am not quite sure that in election by general electorates their position is quite lamentably hopeless....

I now turn to the resolution of the Bihar Provincial Conference with which I freely associated myself. That resolution deals with class representation in the Legislative Councils alone and runs as follows : (1) That this conference is of opinion that while it is necessary in the best interest of the country that all communities should continue as at present to participate without distinction of race or creed in elections by general electorates, it is nevertheless essential in present circumstances to secure full and adequate representation for so important a minority as the Mahommedans are by the creation of special Mahommedan electorates, (2) In the opinion of this conference similar treatment should if necessary be accorded to the Hindus where they are in a minority.

I will deal with the two parts of this resolution separately and in the order in which they stand. The first part expresses the same view that I have held all along. It is only an enunciation of the two principles of class representation affecting Mahommedans, effective representation by special electorates and participation in the general electorates. I believe this is the first resolution of its kind that has been unanimously passed by a conference composed of Hindus and Mahommedans alike. Never before such a body publicly and emphatically recognised the Mahommedan claim for full and adequate representation by the creation of separate Mahommedan Electorates. I will ask the *Observer* to mark the words 'nevertheless', 'important minority', 'essential', 'special Mahommedan electorates' and 'full and adequate'. What is full and

adequate is a matter of detail influenced by various circumstances and the Bihar Conference did not and could not deal with it in the form of a resolution. The Conference concerned itself with the two principles alone and gave expression to its views of the same. I admire the courage and statesmanship of Mr. Gokhale when speaking on the above resolution he told the audience something to this effect: 'The Mahommedans want separate electorate, let them have it, they want more seats than numerically they are entitled to, let them have a few more, but do not allow them and yourselves to be isolated from each other. In the interest of the future of the country co-operation is necessary.' Mr. Satchida Nand Sinha, the President of the Conference, was no less out spoken, fearless and sagacious. The following are quotations from his presidential address:

I am therefore strongly in favour of provision being made for the separate representation of Mussulmans to an extent which will enable them to be adequately represented in the Legislative Councils, regard being had to their numerical proportion, their influence and their position in each province in the country at large.

'Much does not depend on numbers alone, and so long as the Hindus return to the councils men fully qualified to discharge their responsibilities, it is to my mind immaterial if a few seats go to the Mussulmans in excess of their strict numerical proportion.'

Surely my association with men whose sentiments are such as these is not betrayal of the trust the Mahommedans have reposed in me. Are not these views and sentiments the same that form the basis of Mahommedan claim since Amritsar? Have I done a disservice to the Mahommedans by associating myself with Mr. Gokhale in helping the Bihar Conference to give emphatic expression to and recognition of the Mahommedan claim both as to separate electorate and as to adequacy of seats in full? 'Traitor' is a hard word and I expected of a responsible organ of Mahommedan views like the *Observer* to make use of it with some degree of caution if not magnanimity. At a time when militant opposition to Mahommedan claim, has surged from the Calcutta Town Hall to the offices of the Punjab Hindu Sabha, I should have thought that the Bihar Conference proceedings would have been received by the *Observer* with some gratification.

The Moderate Separatist accepts the political necessity of the Mahommedans having full and adequate representation by special electorates of their own but insists on the Mussulmans not cutting themselves adrift from participation in the election by general electorates. It is obvious that dealing with the principles alone of the two the Moderate Separatist has advantage over the extreme Separatist. Apart from the consideration of the number of seats obtainable under the systems proposed by the two the one advocating participation in the general electorates has the merit of higher statesmanship. It seems to me therefore, that if full and adequate Moslem representation is secured by special Mahommedan electorate the Extreme Separatist will have little ground either to cherish or maintain his position of

isolation. The soundness of this proposition was recognised two days after the Bihar Provincial Conference in a meeting of the standing committee of the All-India Moslem League at Aligarh in which I had the honour to preside. Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk Bahadur proposed and Colonel Abdul Majeed Khan seconded the following resolution which was unanimously passed :

'That in the opinion of All-India Moslem League full, adequate and effective representation of Mahommedans cannot be secured without providing for them by special electorates, composed entirely of Mahommedan voters, such a number of seats as may be due to them on the numerical basis also by securing for them by similar electorate, a moiety of the series to which they are entitled on the grounds of their political importance, reserving the other half to be filled in by the participation of the Mahommedans in the elections by general electorates. That this League strongly urges before the Government that the Primary election of the Mahommedans should be through their special electorate above referred to, and that their participation in the general election should only be for the purpose of supplementing their election in respect of a portion of their claim based on the grounds of political importance.'

It will be noticed that the Aligarh resolution while recognising the importance of participation in the general electorates just as much as the Bihar Conference more definitely lays down the lines on which the special and general electorates should be worked. This is a matter of detail apart from the question of principle and so far as this is concerned divergence of views not only between Hindus and Mahommedans, but between Mahommedan and Mahommedan, is inevitable as it must always be in the matter of consideration of details. It is open to the Hindu delegates of the Bihar Conference to regard the extent to which the Aligarh resolution restricts Mahommedan representation by general electorates as undesirable or inexpedient. It is equally open to Mahommedan delegates of that Conference to regard it as an excessive concession to the securing of joint action. These differences and divergences in no way affect the soundness of the two principles the Bihar Conference resolution and the Aligarh resolution uphold, and in doing so, both give their consent not to the details of Sir Harvey Adamson's scheme but to the same two principles that underly it. As I have said before the two principles are full and adequate Moslem representation by special Moslem electorates and Moslem Participation in the general electorates. This is not a new position the All-India Moslem League has taken. It has all along given support to these very two principles contained in the despatch of the 1st October 1908, in other words, to the two principles that are the particular features of Sir Harvey Adamson's scheme. True, Lord Morley has pledged himself to grant Mussulman demands in full. This gives us an undoubted right to insist upon our getting seats by our own special electorates not only in proportion to our numerical strength but also on the ground of our political importance. I may say without any demur that

any trifling with the pledges unqualifiedly given by a great British Minister will end in disastrous disrepute of the soundness and integrity of British statesmanship. It will create a distrust in the Mahommedan mind which will be a novel but alarming feature in the Imperial economy of India. I have too much trust in the good faith of the British Government for a moment to doubt the fulfilment of the pledges given to us. Separate electorates from top to bottom and seats in excess of the numerical test have been promised to us, and the Government in honour cannot break promises solemnly given. But is there any reason for all this to limit Moslem political foresight only to the securing of the largest of seats in the Councils ? Will the possession of an extravagant number of seats alone serve the Mahommedans ? Is this alone such a big prize that all the natural ties of fellow-countrymen-ship must be trampled down under foot ? Is not association with the advanced races of India in their political activities of any value ? Out of touch, out of sympathy, in our self-inflicted isolation cut off from the aspirations, enterprise and advancement of the rest of India our position and the position of our posterity will be unenviable and possibly even of grave peril. This will be the fruit we shall gather of insistence on Extreme Separation. Surely there is a way of securing for ourselves the full advantages of separation with the reserved right of joint action. This is possible by adhering to the principles laid down in the resolution of All-India Moslem League quoted above.

There is no justification for the Extreme-Separatist to suffer from nervous fear at the very mention of the suggestion of participation in the general electorates. If he does so it is due to his having failed to grasp the exceedingly favourable political situation Lord Morley's promises and the scheme of Sir Harvey Adamson have combined to produce. The Secretary of State has acknowledged our political importance and pledged his word to secure exclusively Moslem control over seats in Councils on an estimate of the dual claim of importance and numerical proportion. The Home member of the Viceroy's Executive Councils has put forward a scheme (vide Government of India Despatch, dated 1st October 1908) which has in principle the merit of saving Mahommedans from isolation. I hope the political instinct of the Mahommedans will not desert them in this instance. I trust political foresight will tell them that the present moment is full of promise and full of opportunity and that this is not the time to display purile petulance by attributing bad motive where there is none. Lord Morley, Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Hobhouse in England, and Sir Harvey Adamson, our Non-Moslem sympathiser and our Hindu Countrymen in India, all have claim in our patience and good sense. By the rights of the case we hold at present the coign of vantage, and we have only to comfort ourselves with dignity, coolness and determination to maintain harmonious relation with all of them without any real loss of ground. May I in this connection venture to suggest that a slight modification of Sir Harvey

Adamson's scheme will to solve the problem that is engaging the serious attention of our people? For my purpose I will take up the Imperial Legislative Council alone. I do not propose to deal with the Provincial Councils as the Mahommedan position in relation to them is affected by varying local conditions which must be left to local Mahommedan leaders and to local Mahommedan Associations and Leagues for treatment keeping in view and jealously guarding our right to effectiveness and adequacy of our representation. The importance of the Imperial Council and the position of numerical minority the Mussulmans hold in relation to it are my excuse for the selection.

Now to proceed with my suggestion. The India Council Bill provides 60 members for this Council excluding His Excellency the Viceroy. The Secretary of State in para 22 of his Despatch dated the 27 November 1908, insists on a substantial official majority and thereby removes the Governor-General from the conflict of the division list. Under the circumstances it is unreasonable to suppose that the officials will be anything less than thirty-two, leaving a balance of 28 to be filled in by non-officials. Out of these two can represent small minorities or special interest or be experts and two more to represent the Chamber of Commerce of Calcutta and Bombay. The remaining twenty-four seats should be thrown open to the people of India who are in the main the two communities. Hindus and Mussulmans to be filled in purely by election to represent various bodies and interests. Considering the Mussulmans make up between one-fifth and one-fourth of the entire population, and also considering that the uncivilised portions classified as Hindus for convenience of census returns, take away largely from the strength of the real Hindu majority, it is but fair to say that out of these twenty-four seats one-fourth, *i.e.*, six the Mussulmans are entitled to on the basis of the numerical proportion. Giving them four more which is not by any means too large an estimate of their political importance, the full total strength of our claim on the fairest computation will thus be ten places at least out of twenty-four. On the merits of the promises of Lord Morley it is open to the Extreme-Separatist to say that he will have his pound of flesh and give up political relation with his Non-Moslem countrymen and court desolate isolation in lieu of possessing a few extra seats more or less of doubtful utility in a Council of 60. I am sure sober counsel will not favour such a course. I look to my Muslim countrymen to approach this subject with a broad outlook, a spirit of compromise and an attitude of patriotic obligation. I therefore suggest that we should give up two out of the four seats we have a right to on the ground of political importance, and thus press before Government our claim to representation by special Moslem electorate in respect of eight seats only. The surrender of these two seats to the general electorate is legitimate compensation for the opportunities of our participation in the general political activity of the country. This modification of the scheme of Sir Harvey Adamson will, I trust, be acceptable to Government.

It is in accord with the Muslim League resolution of Aligarh referred to above. With this modification the distribution of the twenty-four seats can be as follows :

Legislative Councils of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, East Bengal and Assam, United Provinces, the Punjab and Burma	7
The landholders of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, East Bengal and Assam, the United Provinces, the Punjab and the Central Provinces	7
Indian Commerce	2
Special Moslem electorate of Bengal, Eastern Bengal, and Assam, United Provinces, the Punjab, Madras, Bombay, N. W. Frontier Province and Central Provinces	8
Total	24

Whatever may have been the chances to Moslem success by general electorates in the past it is much reduced after the hostility that has been so bitterly displaced against Moslem claim in various parts of India. Under the circumstances Moslem participation in the general electorates is not likely to result in the capture of any seats but will serve the important purpose which should be looked upon by the truly patriotic Hindu as the redeeming feature of the 'double vote'.

I now turn to that part of the Bihar conference resolution which I have marked II. I do not believe any Mussulman will object to it. Obviously it has no application to the Imperial Council as the Hindus are in a large majority in India. The words 'if necessary' show how doubtful it is of application to the conditions of election to the Provincial Councils. Even in East Bengal and the Punjab important factors like education, wealth, enterprise and organisation have such Hindu superiority that the necessity to give effect to this resolution will hardly ever arise. At best it is academic and as we are at present circumstanced outside the range of practical politics. Should, however a good case of our Hindu countrymen of having fallen into a helpless minority be made out I am sure the sense of justice and fair play of the Mahommedans will give unstinted support to this resolution. The abstract justice of it no one can deny.

Source : The Pioneer, 5 May 1909.

62

LETTER FROM LORD MACDONNELL TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES ON INDIAN REFORMS

While expressing hearty approval of the reforms, taken as a whole, Major Syed Hassan said that it was a foregone conclusion that if the electoral college scheme was retained in its present form, the non-Moslem majority would absolutely control the elections, and would send to the college only such Mahommedans as would subscribe to its political doctrine. Consequently the Mahommedans would be represented merely in name. The most casual examination of the scheme was sufficient to convince any impartial observer that these apprehensions were not unreal or exaggerated. For instance, he would assume that there were 500 electors in a given division and that one-fifth of these, being Mahommedans, gave their votes to the candidate of their choice. The 400 Hindu electors could give 105 votes to the Mahommedan candidate they liked best, and could divide the remaining 295 votes among four Hindu candidates and under the system of fixed proportions of race representation these four Hindus would be elected side by side with a Mahommedan chosen, not by Moslem, but by Hindu votes. In the final election, that of the college for legislative councillors, the same thing would happen. The Mahommedan electors would not be satisfied, and the pledges Lord Minto had given would not be kept, unless the system of election was made communal.

In the *Times* of to-day Captain Murray, M.P., writes generally to the same effect.

Obviously there is in the minds of some people a serious misapprehension of the nature and probable working of Lord Morley's scheme of proportional representation for India, and, therefore, a few words of explanation, from one who thinks he understands the scheme and highly approves of it, may not be out of place.

As I understand the scheme, it aims at securing to the Mahommedans (with whom alone I am now concerned) such a *minimum* representation in the Electoral Colleges, and consequently, in the Legislative Councils, as shall be proportionate to their numbers in the population of the particular province. But the scheme does not preclude the electors, or the majority of them, from foregoing the advantage they possess, and giving to the minority at a particular election a larger representation than the *minimum* to which, under the scheme, they are entitled. Moreover, it does not say to the Hindus : You shall only elect Hindus; or to the Mahommedans : You shall only choose a Mussulman. Foreseeing the possibility that on agrarian or fiscal or other non-religious questions the Hindus may find their best representative in the Mahommedan, and the Mahommedans their most suitable member of

council in the Hindu ranks (actual occurrences within my own experience), the scheme leaves the electors an unfetted choice of candidate, and in so doing it consults the best interests of India. Of course, ordinarily, the Hindus will elect a Hindu, and the Mahommedans a Mahommedan, but there will be exceptions to the rule; and the more numerous they are the better.

But this is certain, the exceptions will not be of the kind illustrated in the quotation with which this letter begins. There 105 votes out of the Hindu total of 400 are given to a Mahommedan not favoured by his co-religionists, leaving 295 votes for the four remaining Hindu candidates. But obviously if these 295 votes are divided equally between the four Hindu candidates, the Mahommedan candidate having 100 votes will head the poll; while if the 295 votes are unequally divided, the Mahommedan candidate must certainly stand third on the list of four vacancies. The conspiracy of Hindu voters, therefore, which the All-India Moslem League foresees, would have no other result than the doubling of the Mahommedan representation at the expense of the Hindu.

That is not the kind of result, which a Hindu majority is likely to conspire for, or which need disturb Moslem equanimity.

There are some Mahommedans who claim a larger representation than any proportional system could give, because of the traditions of Imperial rule which they inherit, and the prestige attaching to memories of ancient greatness. The traditions are not always respected in the India of to-day. Nor is the prestige very real. It would be as difficult to express in numbers the value of such considerations as it would be, on democratic principles to admit their solidity. Still, I should be disposed to treat these claims for the present with tenderness, and, when a fair case is made out to meet them, by an exercise of the power of nomination which the Government of India wisely proposes to retain.

I sincerely trust that the Government of India will adopt this scheme of proportional representation wherever practicable. In addition to the great advantages enumerated in Lord Morley's despatch of the 27th October, the scheme possesses the additional recommendation of bringing the two great Indian communities closer together, of establishing greater co-operation between them in the management of public affairs and of mitigating that embitterment of feeling which Indian administrators have so much reason to deplore. And if the Government of India, following what I take to be Lord Morley's suggestions, goes further and introduces the principle of proportional representation into all administrative boards or bodies which are now, wholly or partially recruited by election, it will do much to simplify and improve Indian local administration.

Source : The Pioneer, 25 January 1909.

63

PRIVATE TELEGRAM FROM THE VICEROY TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

2 May 1909

I have just arrived Simla and have consulted with H.D. who are in possession of all Mahommedan petitions. In their letter of 4th February the special Committees of All-India Moslem League expressed themselves of as follows : 'The Despatch of the Government of India on the reform scheme, dated 1st October 1908, had carefully considered claim of Mahommedans and had provided for them the means of securing ten seats on Imperial Council, five by special electorate and almost certainly atleast five by general electorate out of 28 seats to be filled by elected members. This arrangement was in keeping with maintenance of principle of effective Mahommedan representation and had also the virtue of linking various class-interests together in the rural and territorial electorates.' The Mahommedans are under a heavy debt of gratitude to your Excellency and your Executive Council for the Despatch, which was characterised not only by foresighted statesmanship, but had great virtues of adjusting divergent claims and interests on considerate and equitable bases, and unless, in some form or other, the reform scheme is carried on the principles on which your Excellency's Despatch was based, I cannot foretell its grateful acceptance by the Mahommedans or any other minority great or small. These views were shared by Deccan Moslem League, Bombay, and the Madras Presidency Moslem League also intimated general approval. In fact the Government of India have received no representations from Mahommedans taking exception to any essential feature of proposals made in their despatch. The misunderstanding arising out of Hobhouse's speech is more complicated. The speech has been interpreted as meaning that major portion of representation accorded to Mahommedans is to be given through the mixed electorates, such as district boards and municipalities, on which they will vote conjointly with other classes and that the special electorate in which Mahommedans will vote separately are only intended to supplement general elections and will carry only a small number of seats. On that assumption it is urged that Mahommedans chosen by the mixed electorates will represent Hindu majority and not the Mahommedan community and that results will be similar to those apprehended in case of mixed electorate colleges. I need hardly say that this is not at all what we contemplated. Our intention was that Mahommedans should have by means of separate electorates, a number of seats closely approaching that to which their numerial proportion in the population would entitle them and that over and above this they would obtain some seats in mixed electorates such as district boards and municipalities, universities, Presidency corporations, and

the landholders. In Bombay for example under the scheme detailed in my telegram of 8th February four seats are specially assigned to Mahommedans, and, in addition to these two Mahommedans will be elected by landholders and district bodies of Sind, so that they will secure a certain minimum of 6 or 28 per cent, their ratio to the general population being only 20. In the United Provinces, where they number only 14 per cent, they will have four special seats, or nearly 20 per cent of the seats assigned for election. Of-course the same ratio cannot be applied in all provinces, and allowances must be made for the status, character, and educational attainments of Mahommedan population in each case. There has also been misapprehension of our views regarding nomination which are intended to be merely a temporary expedient to be resulted to until the community should be ripe for election. I do not understand any Mahommedan here to claim concession suggested by Hobhouse namely that wherever elections are found possible they should be conducted on basis of separate representation of the Mahommedan community. If interpreted literally that would involve having separate Mahommedan electorates within the various electorates proposed, such as Presidency corporations, district boards and municipalities, universities, landholders and the commercial community. This is manifestly impracticable, and has never been suggested. It could only be effected by re-casting the entire scheme and increasing maximum strength of all councils as fixed by bill, on the whole case my view is that present proposals, as now explained, do reasonably fulfil pledges given to Mahommedans.

Source : Morley Papers, 1909.

64

MAHOMMEDAN REPRESENTATION ON THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS

The separate representation accorded to the Mahommedans by the Government of India in the Despatch under consideration is as follows :

Legislative Council	Total of Elected Members	Mohammedan Representatives	Percentage Col. 3 to Col. 2	Percentage Mohammedan to total population
1	2	2	4	5
Viceroy	28	6	21·4	23
Bombay	21	4	19	20
Bengal	26	4	15·3	18
Eastern Bengal and Assam	19	4	21	58
Madras	20	2	10	6
United Provinces	21	4	19	14

Separate Mahommedan representation therefore is not, as was promised, in excess of their ratio to population in the four following Councils, viz., the Viceroy's, Bombay, Bengal, and Eastern Bengal and Assam. But in my opinion the Secretary of State is not pledged to give special representation to the Mahommedans in those provinces in which they are a majority of the population; special representation was demanded, and, as I understood, promised only as a means of safe-guarding the interest of minorities. As the Mahommedans are in a majority in Eastern Bengal they need no special measures to protect their interests, and therefore no change need be made in the numbers assigned to the Legislative Council of Eastern Bengal and Assam, at least from the point of view of protecting Mahommedan interests.

There remain, therefore, three Councils—Bengal, Bombay, and the Viceroy's, in the proposed constitution of which the pledges have not been kept. I proceed to make recommendations regarding them in order.

BENGAL

The Government of India would assign to the Mahommedans four seats, or 15·3 per cent of the elected seats : the proportion of Mahommedans to the total population of Bengal is 18 per cent. In order to satisfy the pledges given the number of Mahommedan seats filled by separate election should be raised by one, *i.e.*, from four to five. Supposing the number of elected seats to remain the same, viz., 26 Mahommedans would then have 19·2 per cent of the elected seats specially reserved for them. This would satisfy (but only just satisfy) the pledge that Mahommedan representation should be in excess of their numerical ratio to the population, I will move that the Local Government be directed to increase the separate Mahommedan representation in Bengal by the addition of one seat, and I would leave to the Local Government to devise the means by which this redistribution of seats should be effected. It is clear there is considerable elasticity in the electorates (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) of Head B. To the Municipalities and District Boards the Lieutenant-Governor originally proposed to assign seven seats; at the request of the Government of India, who thought the Council too small, this was raised to eight; since then, owing to the introduction of an unofficial majority, the number has been raised to ten. In the same manner, since the inception of the scheme, the representation proposed for the landholders has been at different times two, four and five. I should think it probable that the Local Government, which originally believed that the relative importance of Municipalities and District Boards was fairly represented by the figures three and four, would be satisfied to allot four seats to the Municipalities and five to the District Boards, and thus save one seat under sub-head (*b*) where with to increase Mahommedan representation.

BOMBAY

On the Bombay Legislative Council the Government of India would

assign to the Mahommedans four seats out of 21 elected seats, or 19 per cent. The ratio of Mahommedans to the total population is 20 per cent. In order to satisfy the pledges, the number of seats filled by separate Mahommedan electorates in Bombay should be raised by one, *i.e.*, from four to five. Supposing the number of elected seats to remain the same, viz., 21 Mahommedans would then have 23·8 per cent of the elected seats specially reserved to them; if the additional Mahommedan seats were to be taken from the unofficial nominated members and the number of elected seats thereby increased to 22, the ratio of specially reserved Mahommedan seats would be 22·7 per cent of the elected seats. I will move that the Local Government be directed to increase the separate Mahommedan representation on the Bombay Legislative Council by the addition of one seat, and I would leave to the Local Government to devise the means by which this redistribution of seats should be effected.

If these proposals are accepted the figures for the four Provincial Councils in which Mahommedan interests require special protection would be.

Legislative Council	Elected Seats	Mahommedan Seats	Percentage Col. 3 to 2	Percentage of
1	2	3	4	5
Madras	20	2	10	6
United Provinces	21	4	19	14
Bengal	26	5	19·2	18
Bombay	21	5	23·8	2

Assuming that the Local Government would keep the number of elected seats the same as proposed by the Government of India in the present despatch.

THE VICEROY'S COUNCIL

There remains the very difficult question of the Viceroy's Legislative Council. The Government of India assign to the Mahommedans six seats out of 28 elected seats, or 21·4 per cent; the proportion of Mahommedans to the population of all India is 23 per cent. The Government of India assert that, in consideration of their numerical strength and historical and political importance, the Mahommedans are entitled to eight seats, that is 28·5 per cent, of the seats filled by election.

How can these two extra seats be secured ? Clearly not by deduction from the nominated unofficials, who are only four, a very small number for the Imperial Council. The two seats must therefore, come from Head D, but obviously not from sub-head (*c*) Mahommedans nor (*d*) Chambers of Commerce, nor (*e*) Indian Commercial Community. They must therefore be taken from sub-head :

(*a*) Delegates from the Provincial Councils, or from

(*b*) The Landholders of seven provinces.

The latter seems the proper group from which to secure to additional seats for the Mahommedans and the plan to be adopted is the one which has actually been put forward by some of the Mahommedan leaders, notably the Raja of Mahmudabad and Mr. Ali Imam.

The plan is that the landholders of four provinces, viz., Bombay, Eastern Bengal, the Punjab, and the United Provinces should each elect a Hindu and a Mahommedan at alternate elections. The procedure would be as follows : At the first election the Mahommedan landholders of Bombay and Eastern Bengal would elect two representatives (one for each province), and the Hindu landholders of the Punjab and the United Provinces would elect two representatives (one for each province); at the next election the Hindu landholders of Bombay and Eastern Bengal would elect their representatives and the Mahommedan landholders of the Punjab and the United Provinces would elect their representatives, so that in each province the representative landholder would be selected alternately by Hindus and Mahommedans. By this device there would from these four provinces always be two Mahommedans and two Hindus to represent the landholders' interests. A scheme practically identical with this was part of the proposals which Mr. Ali Imam wished to move at Lucknow on 11th July. As I understand the report in the *Pioneer* of 16 July 1909, the resolution was as follows :

'That considering the representation from among the landholders of the Punjab and Eastern Bengal by mixed electorates is calculated to leave the Hindu landlords of these two provinces in a permanent minority, and that similarly such representation is calculated to leave the Mahommedan landlords in Bombay and the United Provinces in a like permanent minority, and that, in as much as the social relations of landlords in these four provinces necessitate the representation to be on a more harmonious basis, the two seats returnable by Mahommedans may be so arranged as to be taken in rotation by the landholders of the four provinces of the Punjab, Bombay, Eastern Bengal, and the United Provinces.

According to the *Times* of 27th July, the Raja of Mahmudabad approved of this scheme, and said that

'This would be a method of election marked by a true spirit of compromise, and giving representation to both Hindu and Mahommedan landholders (the former preponderating in the United Provinces and Bombay, and the latter in the Punjab and Eastern Bengal) without giving rise to racial jealousy.'

The *Times* correspondent went on to add—

'It is said that there is some chance that this scheme may go through, and if it does it will do a great deal towards making the forthcoming reforms more acceptable to the Mahommedans than they are at present.

If these proposals are accepted by the Committee, Mahommedan representation would be as given in the table below :

Legislative Council	Total of Elected Members	Mahommedan Representatives	Percentage of Col. 3 to 2	Percentage of Mahommedans to total population
1	2	3	4	5
Viceroy's	28	8	28·5	23
Bombay	21	5	23·8	20
Bengal	26	5	19·2	18
Eastern Bengal and Assam	19	4	21	58
Madras	20	2	·10	6
United Provinces	21	4	19	14

The Councils of the Punjab and Burma are almost entirely nominated, and therefore the question here under discussion does not arise in them.

Source: Morley Papers, 1909.

65

NOTE GIVEN BY THEODORE MORISON UPON THE PLEDGES GIVEN TO THE MAHOMMEDANS

The first pledge was given by the Viceroy in reply to the Mahommedan deputation which waited upon him at Simla on 1st October 1906. The relevant passage in that speech is :

'The pith of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that, in any system of representation, whether it affects a Municipality, a District Board, or a Legislative Council, in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organisation, the Mahommedan community should be represented as a community. You point out that in many cases electoral bodies as now constituted cannot be expected to return a Mahommedan candidate, and that, if by chance they did so, it could only be at the sacrifice of such a candidate's views to those of a majority opposed to his own community, whom he would in no way represent, and you justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service it has rendered to the Empire, I am entirely in accord with you. Please do not misunderstand me; I make no attempt to indicate by what means the representation of communities can be obtained, but I am as firmly convinced as I believe you to be, that any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of this continent.'

On 27th January 1909 Lord Morley received at the India Office a deputation of the London Branch of the All India Moslem League; his reply to the deputation was cautiously worded, and I do not think that any sentence in it can be fastened upon as constituting a definite pledge, though he made use of several phrases which indicated a disposition to accede to their requests. He said, for instance :

'It would be no departure in substance from the principle of our suggestion that there should be a separate Mahommedan electorate—an electorate exclusively Mahommedan; and in view of the wide and remote distances and difficulties in organisation, in consequence of those distances in the area constituting a large province, I am not sure that this is not one of those cases where election by two stages would not be in the highest degree convenient and so there might be a separate electoral college exclusively Mahommedan.'

Later on he referred to the amount of representation to be extended to Mahommedans in these words :

'I repeat, I see no harm, from the point of view of a practical working compromise, in the principle that population, numerical strength, should be the main factor in determining how many representatives should sit for this or the other community; but modifying influences may be taken into account in allotting the numbers of such representatives.'

When, however, the Secretary of States moved the second reading of the Indian Councils Bill in the House of Lords on 23 February he made a much more definite statement, and gave an unequivocal pledge; he said :

'The Mahommedans demand three things. I had the pleasure of receiving a deputation from them and I know very well what is in their minds. They demand the election of their own representatives to these councils in all the stages, just as in Cyprus, where, I think, the Mahommedans vote by themselves. They have nine votes and the non-Mahommedans have three, or the other way about. So in Bohemia, where the Germans vote alone and have their own register. Therefore we are not without a precedent and a parallel for the idea of a separate register. Secondly they want a number of seats in excess of their numerical strength. Those two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet in full.'

The reference to the deputation is important, because it proves that when Lord Morely promised 'to meet the Mahommedan demands in full' he had in his mind the demands which the Mahommedan deputation had made to him, and his statement must be read in connection with written petition which they had submitted to him. As an appendix to their petition the Mahommedans had submitted suggestions for a scheme of Mahommedan representation which is based upon the principle of the separate (or double) register for Hindu and Mahommedan voters, whereby all the Mahommedan representatives would be returned by Mahommedan voters. In the body of their petition the deputation made use of the following phrase :

'Save as regards University representation in which both communities

have the privilege of double voting, the Mahommedan subjects of His Majesty, so long as they can obtain adequate and substantial communal representation on the Councils, the Rural and District Boards and Corporations, with the right of electing their own representatives, do not ask for double votes.'

It is, I think, clear from this that what the Mahommedans had demanded and what Lord Morley had conceded was that the Mahommedans were to have more representatives than they were entitled to upon a calculation of their bare numerical strength, and that all those representatives were to be returned by separate Mahommedan electorates.

The pledge was reiterated by Mr. Buchanan when he moved the second reading in the House of Commons on 1st April 1909. He said :

'And more than that, particularly with regard to the Mahommedans, they have a special and overwhelming claim upon us, namely, the solemn promises, given by those who are entitled with full responsibility to speak for us, that they would get adequate representation to the amount and of a kind they want a promise given to them by Lord Minto specifically in October 1906, repeated in a Despatch by the Secretary of State in 1907, and again repeated by the Secretary of State to a deputation here and in a speech in another place. From that promise we cannot go back, we ought not to go back, and we will not go back.'

It may be confessed (in the privacy of this Office) that Mr. Buchanan did not realise the full significance of these 'solemn pledges', for he proceeded to unfold to the House of Commons the Government of India's scheme. But the point was immediately taken by Lord Percy, who pointed out that if the Government of India's scheme was adhered to, and the pledges made to the Mahommedans redeemed, the maximum numbers mentioned in the schedule to the Bill would have to be increased; the point was further pressed by Lord Ronaldshay and Mr. Balfour, the latter asking for a more definite reply to the question raised by Lord Percy. Lord Percy returned to the charge on 19th April in Committee, and pointed out the number of seats to be assigned to the Mahommedans were the same as originally proposed by the Government of India :

'A proposal which was denounced as entirely inadequate by the Mahommedan deputation which waited on the Secretary of State at the India Office, and I think that the pledge of the Secretary of State in the House of Lords was understood by them to mean that he would revise that proportion as originally suggested.'

Later on Lord Percy said :

'If that is the case, I cannot help feeling that if matters are left in their present state, and that the representation assigned to the Mahommedans is not increased, it will lead to very serious disappointment, and probably even to charges of breach of faith.'

Mr. Hobhouse in reply read a telegram from the Government of India as follows :

'The method proposed is simply that in general electorates such as municipalities, district boards and members of provincial councils, all sects and classes, including Mahommedans, will vote together. By this means some, but not sufficient, representation will be obtained for Mahommedans. In addition a certain number of seats will be reserved for Mahommedans, and none but Mahommedans will have a voice in filling these. They may be filled in many ways, by election pure and simple, by election, by associations, by electoral college, or by nomination, as the circumstances of each province require. Methods will vary in different provinces, and will be subject to alternations from time to time in individual provinces as experience may dictate.'

But in spite of this exposition of the Government of India's view Mr. Hobhouse closed his remarks with a reiteration of one of Lord Morley's pledges :

'With regard to numbers, the Secretary of State does not depart in any way from the pledge which he has given in another place as to the sufficient, and, indeed, over-sufficient representation from the numerical standpoint of the Mahommedan.'

Lord Percy immediately pointed out the inconsistency of those two statements by Mr. Hobhouse, and he was followed of Lord Ronaldshay who complained that Mr. Hobhouse 'has not in the least met the point of the noble Lord below me who asked how the apportionment of seats on the Provincial Council is to be altered in order to give the Mahommedans not only a fair share, but the additional share which the Secretary of State has promised them, the share over and above their actual numerical proportion. The promise of the Secretary of State in another place appeared to me to be perfectly definite. He said that the Mahommedans were to elect their own representatives, as they do in Crete and other places. That does not in the least tally with what has just fallen from the lips of the honourable gentlemen opposite. He says that this is not the case, that the Mahommedans are to continue to endeavour to secure seats under a mixed electorate. How can he reconcile that statement with the promise given by the Secretary of State to the Mahommedan community on the second reading of the Bill in another place ?'

In order to secure the exact fulfilment of the pledges given to the Mahommedans, Lord Ronaldshay, on 26th April, moved an amendment upon the report stage of the Bill providing that the ratio of Mussulman and Hindu representation should be fixed by executive authority, and that in every case in which any seat on a representative body thus assigned to the Mahommedan community was to be filled by election, the necessary electorate should be composed exclusively of Mahommedans. He closed his speech with these words :

'I believe, in the second place, that the Government have told them that they intend to meet the two demands to the full; and, thirdly, I espouse their

cause on this occasion because I foresee that if the Government of this country follow on a course which is in any way calculated to shake the faith of any great community in India they are going far to undermine the whole effect of British supremacy in India.'

I draw attention to these remarks of the Opposition, not so much because they show what interpretation was placed upon Lord Morley's pledge by independent witnesses, but because they make it clear that the very point which we are now discussing was prominently brought to the notice of His Majesty's Ministers, and the answer given subsequently by Mr. Hobhouse was given with full knowledge of the point in dispute and that his answer is therefore full of significance. Mr. Hobhouse practically admitted that there was some divergence between the pledges given by the Viceroy and Secretary of State and the views expressed in the telegram from the Government of India, and he went on to say :

'That does not mean that the telegram necessarily closes discussion. It does not mean that they have done more than propose to the Secretary of State certain things.. It does not follow that because there are difficulties experienced in the Government of India that those difficulties are either permanent or fundamental, and I can assure the noble Lord opposite that every endeavour will be made by the Government of India and by the Government at home to remove any sort or kind of obstacle which may be found to lie within our power to the carrying out of the pledges which have been given before this House.'

Mr. Hobhouse closed his remarks with a very emphatic observation, which in view of the points raised by the Opposition cannot be explained away.

'Before I sit down I would add one sentence, and it is that wherever elections are found possible they shall be conducted on the basis of separate representation, of the Mahommedan community.'

There have therefore been four important official declarations regarding Mahommedan representation, all increasing in exactness as the controversy proceeded :

(1) From the Viceroy in answer to the Mahommedan deputation on 1st October 1906.

(2) From the Secretary of State at the second reading of the Bill in the House of Lords, in which, after recapitulating the Mahommedan demands, he said, 'these two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet in full.'

(3) From the Under-Secretary of State for India (Mr. Buchanan) on 1st April, stating that the pledges to the Mahommedans were that they would get adequate representation to the amount and of a kind they want, and then saying from that promise we cannot go back, we ought not to go back, and we will not go back.'

(4) From Mr. Hobhouse on 26 April, speaking for the Under-Secretary of State for India, and declaring 'wherever elections are found possible they

shall be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mahommedan community.'

The proposals now submitted by the Government of India are absolutely inconsistent with these pledges; to demonstrate this it is sufficient to quote in their words the plan which they recommend, the third solution of the problem of Mahommedan representation, viz. :

'Separate electorates supplemented to the full extent of their legitimate claims by further representation through mixed electorates (on some of which the Mahommedans would have a majority) or by nomination were they to fail to obtain a fair share of elective seats.'

This means that the second pledge (that they should have representation in excess of their numerical strength) can only be secured by ignoring the first (that they should elect their own representatives). As the proposals are put forward the separate representation of Mahommedans, far from being in excess of their ratio to population, is actually below it in all but two Councils, as the following table shows :

Legislative Council	Total of Elected Members	Mahommedan Representatives	Percentage of Col. 3 to 2	Percentage of Mahommedans to total population
1	2	3	4	5
Viceroy's	28	6	21·4	23
Bombay	21	4	19	20
Bengal	26	4	15·3	18
Eastern Bengal and Assam	19	4	21	58
Madras	20	2	10	6
United Provinces	21	4	19	14

The Councils of the Punjab and Burma are almost entirely nominated, and therefore the question here under discussion does not arise in them.

To satisfy the pledges given in this country the figures in column 4 ought always to have been in excess of the figures in column 5. The Councils of Madras and the United Provinces satisfy this condition; in all other cases they are actully less. The device of supplementing separate (or communal) representation by further representation from mixed electorates is inconsistent with Lord Morley's pledges; indeed, the Mahommedans contend that Mahommedans so elected would not be their representatives at all; the only genuine Mahommedan representatives are those whom they elect themselves, and these it has been shown are less, not more, than they were promised. But there is yet another point; inconsistent as this device is with the promises given to the Mahommedans it is very doubtful whether it will secure what the Government of India expect. They themselves say that 'it is impossible at the present moment to forecast the working of untried political machinery, but we trust that when the new electoral system comes into operation it will be found compatible with the adequate representation of the other interests and communities which it is incumbent upon us to safeguard, and trust our

proposals will be generally accepted as an equitable settlement of a very grave difficulty.' In other words the Government of India would leave the fulfilment of the pledges to the hazard of elections; whether they are fulfilled or not under this scheme depends upon whether the Hindus or the Mahommedans prove themselves the greatest adepts in electioneering tactics in the constituencies where the two communities are evenly balanced, and where the Mahommedans are in a minority the fulfilment of the promises made to them by His Majesty's Ministers in Parliament will depend upon the forbearance of their political opponents.

P. S.—In preparing this note at the request of the Committee, I have confined myself to the one point upon which I was asked to make a report, viz., the promises made to the Mahommedans and the extent to which they are met by the proposals of the Government of India. I have cut the quotations out of the official reports and pasted them on to this note to secure myself against errors of transcription, except in a solitary instance in which the official report was inaccurate or where I had but a few words to copy. I hope in a later note to lay before the Committee the specific amendments which I propose to move.

66

POSTSCRIPT TO THE NOTE UPON THE PLEDGES GIVEN TO THE MAHOMMEDANS BY THEODORE MORISON

I regret that I did not deal with the point raised by Mr. Gupta in my first note. It may expedite the disposal of business if I deal with it now in the form of a postscript to my original summary of the pledges given to the Mahommedans.

Mr. Gupta's contention is that the pledges given to the Mahommedans 'apply only so far as the general, mixed or popular franchise is concerned, and cannot extend to seats representing certain strictly limited interests.' I should like to say, in the first place, that this is not the sense in which the pledges were ever interpreted in the very full debates upon the subject in the House of Commons. It was conceded by Sir H. Cotton that the Secretary of State had committed himself 'to the statement that the Mahommedans should be granted a larger representation than they would be entitled to by their numbers,' and he proceeded to argue that that pledge had been redeemed by the Government of India inasmuch as the seats which the Mahommedans would win in the mixed electorates, added to those which

were specially reserved to them would give them a total representation in excess of their numerical ratio to the population. In other words Sir H. Cotton realised that the pledge regarding the amount of representation to be given to the Mahommedans was not kept by the number of seats specially assigned to them by the Government of India unless these were supplemented by seats won in the mixed electorate. The Prime Minister, on 1st April, had put forward exactly the same defence; his words were :

'The number of Mahommedans on the Viceroy's Council are only five, but on the other hand, as the Noble Lord knows, on the Viceroy's Council there will be 20 nominated members, of whom 17 are to be officials, and there is no reason why Mahommedans should not come into that category. In addition there are to be Mahommedans elected by other communities, Chambers of Commerce, and so forth, and it is not improbable that among this category Mahommedan representatives might be found. I do not think there is any serious danger or any danger at all of the Mahommedans not being adequately represented on the Viceroy's Council.

I have no intention of attempting to take advantage of the Prime Minister's inevitable ignorance of Indian electorates, but I contend that the general trend of his argument is unmistakeable; he maintained that Mahommedan representation would be sufficient when supplemented by the seats gained in the general or mixed constituencies; he did not contend, as Mr. Gupta does, that it was already sufficient without being so supplemented. Had His Majesty's Ministers ever had the intention of putting forward the plea which Mr. Gupta advances it would have been quite open for them to do so on the unamended figures proposed by the Government of India in their Despatch of 1 October 1908. By adopting Mr. Gupta's plan of leaving out one-third to one-half of the Council and calculating the proportion which Mahommedan seats bear to the remainder they could have produced the following striking table (which is constructed upon the same principle as Mr. Gupta's) :

Council	Mahommedan representation per cent	Percentage of Mahommedans to population
Viceroy's	29·4	23
Madras	20·0	6
Bombay	27·2	20
Bengal	20·0	18
United Provinces	28·1	14

So that without the additions to Mahommedan representation which the Government of India has since made, and without reckoning the anticipated results of the mixed elections, His Majesty's ministers might have claimed, as Mr. Gupta does now that 'the proposals of the Government of India amply redeem whatever pledges may have been given.' The fact that they did not do so, but resorted to a perfectly different line of defence is, I submit, conclusive evidence that it never occurred to them to interpret the pledges in the qualified sense which is now proposed.

Nor can it be argued that the point was not before them, for on 19th April Lord Percy based his charges of breach of faith upon the very method of calculation which I have employed. He complained that the Mahommedans were only to have five seats on the Viceroy's Council, that is one-twelfth of the whole 'bodies (sic) of members, and one-fifth if you take the elected members only. In the case of Eastern Bengal the figures are very striking. There the Mahommedans actually number three-fifths of the whole population according to the statement of the Secretary of State. Well in Eastern Bengal they are only to have two seats reserved—that is one-third* of the whole Council and only one-seventh of the elected members.' Lord Percy's calculations were not challenged by Mr. Hobhouse when he spoke in reply on behalf of the Under Secretary (Mr. Buchanan). If His Majesty's Ministers had ever meant that Mahommedan representation was not to be calculated in proportion to the whole Council, but only in proportion to fraction of it, they would presumably have questioned Lord Percy's figures. But they did nothing of the kind; they accepted them and pointed out by reading the telegram of the Government of India, that the deficiency in Mahommedan representation would be supplemented by seats won in the mixed electorates, a line of argument which is inconsistent with the plea advanced by Mr. Gupta.

But after all, the House of Commons is not here our main concern. The important point is to satisfy the Mahommedans in India, the bulk of whom are rather ignorant, rather slow witted, that the pledges made to them have been loyally kept. Subtleties will be thrown away upon them; even if they cannot detect the argumentative error they will feel that they have been overreached. If they articulate their grievance they will, I suspect say, as the man in the street would say, that the words 'ratio' and 'fraction', unless specially qualified, mean ratio or fraction of the whole, and that as Mahommedans were told that they were to elect members in the ratio which Mahommedans bear to the whole population they understood that promise to mean that the ratio of Mahommedan seats to the total of elected seats would be the same as the ratio which the Mahommedans bear to the total population.

If I shared Mr. Gupta's views that the proposals of the Government of India amply redeem the pledges given, I should still strongly deprecate the official adoption of the line of argument which he has followed in his note. A charge of ingenuity of subtlety in the interpretation of pledges is not one which the Government of India can afford to have levelled against it. All its dealing should be of such transparent candour as not to stand in need of elaborate justification; I should much rather see the Government of India err on the side of naive simplicity than of sophistical cleverness. If ever the time should come when a pledge cannot be kept, which is fortunately not now the case, it would be far better for the Government to say roundly that

* The one-third in above must be either a slip or incorrect report, the fignre should be one-eighteenth. One seventh is correct, or sufficiently near to represent the speaker's meaning, two fifteenth is the exact fraction.

it had changed its mind than to resort to ingenious explanations which breed an uneasy suspicion among the people that word of the Government cannot be accepted at its face value.

Source : Morley Papers, 1909.

67

LEAGUE'S PAMPHLET ON THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND THE MAHOMMEDANS

A RECORD OF CONFLICTING STATEMENTS

The details of Indian life and administration are too complex to be readily understood by anyone not familiarised therewith by residence in the country or constant study of them, and when, as in the problem of the position of the Mahommedan community in connection with the establishment of an electoral system, one proposal after another has been put forward as constituting the official solution the situation is likely to be misapprehended even by persons ordinarily well-informed on Indian affairs. They may reasonably be inclined to assume that the solution has been reached when the Viceroy of India concludes a telegraphic exposition of the latest plan of the Government of the India with a declaration that, in his view, their proposals 'do reasonably fulfil the pledges given to Mahommedans'. Unhappily, however, the opinion of his Excellency on this matter is not borne out by a survey of those pledges, and the circumstances under which they were made. The purpose of this pamphlet is not to reargue a case for justice to the Mahommedans, again and again set forth both here and in India, but to give a connected view of the frequent and, unhappily, conflicting, official statements on the subject, so as to make clear to every unprejudiced reader that the Indian Mahommedans have been taken to the verge of the Land of Promise but have not been given possession. The results of this failure to fulfil repeated pledges, if it is adhered to, must be injurious not only to the community immediately concerned, but also to India as a whole, as well as to British prestige in the East; and hence the present chronological record calls for the attentive consideration of the Press, of members of the Legislature, and of other public men to whom it is addressed.

THE FIRST PLEDGE

It is well known that the first definite pledge on which the Indian

Mahommedans rely in connection with the Reforms was given by the Viceroy in reply to a representative deputation of leading Mahommedans from all parts of India, introduced by His Highness the Agha Khan, which waited on His Excellency at Simla on 1st October 1906. A committee of the Executive Council, had at that time been appointed to consider the question of an expansion of the Indian Legislatures and other reforms in the direction of giving the people a larger voice in the conduct of affairs, general, provincial and local. In the address presented to His Excellency, the deputation drew attention to the importance of adequate recognition of the numbers and influence of the Moslem community in any such reforms. It was urged that :

The position accorded to the Mahommedan community in any kind of representation, direct or indirect, and in all other ways affecting their status and influence, should be commensurate not merely with their numerical strength, but also with their political importance, and the value of the contribution which they make to the defence of the Empire; and we also hope that your Excellency will, in this connection, be pleased to give due consideration to the position which they occupied in India a little more than a hundred years ago, and of which the traditions have naturally not faded from their minds.

Detailed methods of fulfilling this principle were suggested not only in respect to the Legislatures, but also in regard to local self-governing bodies. It was suggested that the local authority—in other words the Provincial Government—should, in every case, be required to declare the number of Hindus and Mahommedans entitled to seats on municipal and district boards, such proportion to be determined in accordance with the numerical strength, social status, local influence and special requirements of either community; and that the elections should be separate.

His Excellency's reply contained an explicit endorsement of the principle thus laid down, and gave the utmost satisfaction to the deputation, and when published, to the millions for whom the Agha Khan and his colleagues spoke, Lord Minto said it was manifestly impossible to go into the actual details laid before him, though these would be submitted to the Committee of his Council he had appointed to consider the question of representation. But he could reply to the general tenour of their remarks :

The pith of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that, in any system of representation, whether it affects a municipality, a district board, or a Legislative Council in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organisation, the Mahommedan community should be represented as a community. You point out that in many cases electoral bodies as now constituted cannot be expected to return a Mahommedan candidate, and that, if by chance they did so, it could only be at sacrifice of such a candidate's views to those of a majority opposed to his own community, whom he would in no way represent, and you justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the

political importance of your community and the service it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you. Please do not misunderstand me; I make no attempt to indicate by what means the representation of communities can be obtained, but I am as firmly convinced, as I believe you to be, that any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of this continent. The great mass of the people of India have no knowledge of representative institutions. I agree with you, gentlemen, that the initial rungs in the ladder of self-government are to be found in the municipal and district boards, and that it is in that direction that we must look for the gradual political education of the people. In the meantime I can only say to you that the Mahommedan community may rest assured that their political rights and interests as a community will be safeguarded in any administrative reconstruction with which I am concerned, and that you and the people of India may rely upon the British Raj to respect, as it has been its pride to do, the religious beliefs and the national traditions of myriads composing the population of His Majesty's Indian Empire.

THE PLEDGE AFFIRMED

The first official document published in connection with the Reform scheme was the circular letter to Local Governments, dated Simla, 24th August 1907, outlining the provisional proposals of the Governor-General in-Council as a result of the labours of the Committee already mentioned. In paragraph 16 of the arguments of the deputation of the previous October were quoted with approval, and 'special stress' was laid on his Excellency's observations as to the mischief of a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population. It was admitted that in the past the representation of the Mahommedan community, even though supplemented by nomination had been incommensurate with the weight to which it was entitled. It was suggested that in addition to the small number of seats the Mahommedans might be able to secure in the ordinary manner, it would be desirable in each of the Councils to assign a certain number of seats to be filled exclusively by Mahommedans.

In submitting to the Secretary of State their scheme of reforms, revised in the light of constant public discussion of the draft plan, the Government of India, in the despatch of 1st October 1908, were able to report that 'all local Government approve of the proposals for the special representation of Mahommedans which were made in our letter of 24th August 1907.' It was pointed out that in some provinces there would be difficulties in the way of a separate Mahommedan electorate, owing to want of organisation, to paucity of numbers of qualified persons, or to scattered residence. But the Government of India clearly contemplated separate electorates as the normal and most satisfactory condition of things.

We would deal with the question in the same way as we have proposed to deal with the representation of landholders. Our view is that in provinces where election by a regular Mahommedan electorate is feasible, that method should be adopted; that Mahommedan associations should be made use of where electorates cannot be formed; and that nomination by Government should be resorted to where neither of the first two methods are practicable. It will be for the Local Government to determine, in consultation with the leaders of the Mahommedan community which plan should be adopted. (Para 30).

Thus both in the draft and the revised scheme of the Government of India there was retention of the principle of separate communal representation, and it was laid down that wherever elections were found possible they should be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mahommedans. Yet in the telegram read to the House of Lords, on 4th May, Lord Minto speaks of this as impracticable, and asserts that he does not understand it to be claimed by any Mahommedans in India.

LORD MORLEY'S SUGGESTED PLAN

It will be in the recollection of all interested in this question, that in his despatch of 27th November 1908, replying to the Government of India, Lord Morley, 'without rejecting the various expedients suggested by His Excellency for adoption,' in order to secure the adequate representation of the Mahommedans, suggested for consideration a plan of electoral colleges, to which a fixed proportion of Mahommedans and Hindus in the ratio of population should be returned, and which should elect to the Legislature of the province representatives for the two communities in like proportion. His Lordship remarked that among other advantages such a plan would bring the classes specially concerned within the popular electorate, and so meet the criticism of the Hindus, to which you refer in paragraph 30—an observation which, incidentally affords proof that the Secretary of State understood the plan of the Government of India to be one of election of 'the classes specially concerned' (landowners and Mahommedan) separately from the territorial elections.

His Lordship's suggestion for mixed electoral colleges was immediately followed by the most vigorous protests from the Mahommedans in India and their brethren entitled and expressly authorised to speak for them in this country. Emphatic resolutions on the subject were passed almost simultaneously by the conference of the All India Moslem League at Amritsar and by the London Branch. The resolution of the latter body, whilst gratefully recognising the value of the Reform scheme as a whole, set forth that 'any method which entrusts the election of Mahommedan representatives to the Viceregal and Provincial Councils to a mixed body of electors would be highly detrimental to Mahommedan interests, and that the only system which would meet the just claims and requirements of His Majesty's Mussulman subjects is

the separate election of their own representatives by Mahommedan voters.'

THE DEPUTATION AND ITS SEQUEL

The grounds for this view, and for the alarm and apprehension the mixed electoral college scheme excited in Moslem circles, were focussed in a representation laid before Lord Morley by a deputation of the London Branch on 27th January, headed by the President, Mr. Ameer Ali. In the course of his reply, the Secretary of State sought to reassure his hearers by pointing out that his scheme of mixed electoral colleges was not put forward as a direction to the Government of India, but was in the form of a suggestion for consideration. He said he would discuss their suggestions with the Government of India; that a separate Mahommedan electorate was not necessarily outside the scope of the despatch, and that while he held that numerical strength should be the main factor in determining how many representatives should sit for this or the other community, modifying influences might be taken into account in allotting the number of such representatives.

These remarks were regarded as somewhat too vague and indefinite to satisfy the Mahommedans as to the fulfilment of the Viceroy's pledge, and a further pronouncement as a result of discussion between the India Office and the Governor-General in Council was anxiously awaited. It was with the utmost relief that the community and the large body of public opinion in this country supporting their claims read an announcement by the Secretary of State of a decision to 'meet to the full' the requirements of the Mahommedans in respect to the elections. In moving the Second Reading of the Indian Councils Bill in the House of Lords on 23rd February the Secretary of State said :

The Mahommedans demand... the election of their own representatives to these councils in all the stages, just as in Cyprus, where, I think, the Mahommedans vote by themselves. They have nine votes and the non-Mahommedans have three, or the other way about. So in Bohemia, where the Germans vote alone and have their own register. Therefore we are not without a parallel for the idea of a separate register. Secondly, they want a number of a seats in excess of their numerical strength. These two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet to the full.

This unequivocal declaration, constituting an application in detail of the pledges given by the Viceroy some two and half years earlier, was received with much relief by the Moslem community. Their leaders regarded the battle for their rights at an end, and awaited with every confidence the measures of Government for giving effect to the two vital demands they had put forward. The London Branch of the League promptly conveyed to Lord Morley the grateful thanks of the community; and took the opportunity to remark that they construed his Lordship's declaration 'as also applicable to the elections for district, municipal and rural self-governing bodies, as these

elections have invariably been included in the Mussulman appeal for adequate and distinct representation.' They asked for further details, and offered to supply any information in their possession calculated to assist in the framing of the scheme.

OPPOSITION AND ITS RESULTS

Although many of the Nationalist political leaders had expressed vague and indefinite sympathies with the Moslem claims, the acceptance of them by the Government was the signal for considerable anti-Moslem agitation. Meetings were got up in various centres to 'protest' against the promised fulfilment of long-standing pledges. Mr. Surendranath Banerjee and fifteen other leading Nationalist politicians in Calcutta issued a manifesto, declaring the 'innovations' to be dangerous, and what they would 'prefer the abandonment of the entire scheme (of reform) rather than see it carried in its present shape.' The subsidised organ of the Congress party here, and the Parliamentary group connected with that party, were active in pressing for what they were pleased to term the non-recognition of 'creed distinctions'. A hostile amendment to the second reading of the Councils Bill, tabled by Mr. C. J. O'Donnell, asked the House to declare that it could not approve of 'legislation by which it is intended to establish sectarian discrimination, and to apply sectarian tests both to members Legislative Councils and to the voters who will elect them.' The falsity of the suggestions underlying these words, and of the analogies drawn in the amendment, were pointed out in a pamphlet issued by the London Branch, and evidence was cited to show that the opposition to the election of Mahommedan representatives on a separate register had for its distinct object the subordination of the stable and loyal Mahommedan element to Hindu, or rather Brahmanical, dominancy.

In the debate on the second reading on 1st April, Mr. Buchanan, the Under-Secretary for India, declared the Secretary of State's adhesion to the 'solemn promise' given to the Mahommedans again and again 'that they would get adequate representation to the amount and of a kind they want.' From that promise, thrice repeated, 'we cannot go back, we ought not to go back, and we will not go back.' The Prime Minister was equally emphatic, and brushed aside the sophistries underlying Mr. O'Donnell's amendment. In reply to some remarks of Lord Percy, he said (Times report) :

Undoubtedly there will be a separate register for Mahommedans. To us here, at first sight, it looks an objectionable thing, because it discriminates between people and segregates them into classes on the basis of religious creed. I do not think that is a very formidable objection. The distinction between Mahommedan and Hindu is not merely religious, but it cuts deep-down into the traditions of the historic past, and is also differentiated by the habits and social customs of the community.

To these declarations no exception could be taken, but when Mr. Buchanan came to details as to the form of fulfilling the pledges his remarks,

as Mr. Ameer Ali observed at a public meeting on the following day, 'were not of a character to satisfy the community as constituting a complete and genuine fulfilment' (Times report, 3rd April). Mr. Buchanan said that the scheme of joint electoral colleges having been dropped, Mahommedan representation would be maintained in the future in different ways in different provinces :

In some provinces by a system of Mahommedan electorates specially constructed, in other cases by asking Mahommedans associations to name representatives, in others, at any rate for the time, by nomination. He could not give the House full particulars as to the various policies in the various provinces, but with regard to the United Provinces they had assurances from the Lieutenant-Governor that he held to the scheme proposed in the Blue-book. The substance of that was that of the four Mahommedans who were to be placed on the Legislative Council of the United Provinces two would be nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor. With regard to Eastern Bengal, the two Mahommedan representatives who were included in the constitution of the new Council would be put on that Council in accordance with the ideas submitted in the big Blue-book from the Governor of that province—that was to say, certain Mahommedans in Eastern Bengal would be asked to choose representatives. The only other province from which they had a definite recommendation at the present moment was Madras. They were unable to devise a scheme of a Mahommedan electorate and they proposed at any rate at first, to remain with two Mahommedan representatives on that Council by means of nomination (Times report, 2nd April).

In the speech already referred to, Mr. Ameer Ali promptly and clearly stated the objections of the Mahommedan community, and the grounds for them. To again quote the Times report (3rd April) he said :

For one thing, in every authoritative announcement on behalf of the Mahommedans they had expressed opposition to any resort to the system of nomination instead of election. There was no difficulty, as they had shown in the creation of special Mussulman electorates. (Cheers). Unless their representatives were chosen by themselves instead of by the Government their independence would be questioned, and it would be asserted that they were only voicing the opinions of the Government by whom they had been nominated. With respect to numbers, it was absurd to give only two Mahommedan representatives to Eastern Bengal, where they formed a predominant majority of the population. In spite of this majority in numbers, they were willing to concede that, in view of the wealth and intelligence of the Hindu community, the latter should have a majority of seats in the local Legislature. But they certainly did not contemplate that their own guaranteed representation would be so utterly inadequate as two members only. (Cheers). Unless the numbers Mr. Buchanan mentioned were greatly augmented, the Mahommedans would not be able to exercise a substantial voice in the deliberations of the Sirkar.

THE FIRST TELEGRAM FROM THE VICEROY

These views were fully endorsed by the Mahommedan leaders in India when information reached them as to the tenour of Mr. Buchanan's speech. Meanwhile, there was jubilation in the opposite camp. Mr. O'Donnell refrained from moving his amendment, and the Congress organ, *India*, devoted a leader to showing that Lord Morley's pledges were not to be fulfilled; that 'wiser counsels had prevailed', and that though the scheme was still open to objection, the ship had at least been taken into mid channel. The pressure of advanced Hindu political leaders upon the Indian authorities, now that it was seen that the pledges were not to be fully regarded, was redoubled, and the effect of such pressure was seen when the Committee stage of the Bill was taken on 19th April. The Secretary to the Treasury, Mr. Hobhouse (representing the India Office in the absence, through illness, of Mr. Buchanan) was asked by Earl Percy to reconcile the statements made on the second reading with Lord Morley's promise that Mahommedan representation should be not merely sufficient, but something in excess of their actual numerical position. Mr. Hobhouse said that the Secretary of State adhered to that declaration 'in all its fullness and completeness', but added that the difficulty had been how to provide such representation without unnecessarily increasing the numbers of Legislative Councillors. Communications with the Government of India on this 'difficult and complicated problem' had been passing, and, telegraphing on 12th April, the Viceroy said :

The method proposed is simply that in general electorates, such as municipalities, district boards, and provincial councils, all sects and classes, including Mahommedans, will vote together. By this means some, but not sufficient representation, will be obtained for Mahommedans. In addition, a certain number of seats will be reserved for Mahommedans, and no one but Mahommedans will have a voice in filling them. They may be filled in many ways—by election pure and simple, by election, by associations, by electoral colleges, or by nomination, as the circumstances of each province require. The methods will vary in different provinces, and will be subject to alterations from time to time as experience may dictate.

The Earl of Ronaldshay at once pointed out that elections conducted as suggested would not constitute a fulfilment of the promises given to the Mahommedans, and that it was absurd to suppose that under the system proposed in the telegram they would be able to gain their fair share of representation on the Legislative and other councils. The news of this telegram was received by the Mahommedans in India almost with incredulity, for they could not believe that there would be so great a lapse between the promises of Government and their performance. But incredulity gave place to dismay and bitter disappointment; meetings were held in all parts of the country, and strongly worded resolutions of protest were recorded by various branches of the All-India Moslem League, some of them being

telegraphed to this country and published in the newspapers. It is not too much to say that the Moslems felt that they had been betrayed by the Government, and that they were, after all, to be subjected to the dominance of the Hindu majority, and consequently to be a negligible quantity in the shaping of legislation and the influencing of executive action. The overwhelming evidence of this state of feeling could not be passed over by the authorities, and once more the Government of India pledged its word.

REMOVING OBSTACLES FROM THE PATH

When the Councils Bill came up in the Commons on report, on 26th April, Lord Ronaldshay brought matters to an issue by moving an amendment providing that the ratio of Mussulman and Hindu representation on all representative bodies should be fixed by executive authority, and that in every case in which any seat on a representative body thus assigned to the Mahommedan community was to be filled by election, the necessary electorate should be composed exclusively of Mahommedans. Lord Ronaldshay drew attention to published telegrams from important Moslem leaders in India, and said that they showed that the Mahommedans throughout India were suffering from a sense of grievous wrong and injustice. He truly remarked that if the Government followed a course calculated to shake the faith of this great community in their undeviating justice and the inviolability of their word, they would go far to undermine the whole fabric of British rule in Asia. Thereupon, Mr. Hobhouse declared that there had been a misunderstanding of the telegram of 12th April, and that the pledges given were to be adhered to. He went on to say :

Looking to the size of India and the different customs, traditions, and habits of the various peoples, it was not surprising that the local authorities found in the course of their inquiries that it would be impossible to apply a uniform system under which the principle could be carried out. The noble lord thought that he had detected some divergence between the view expressed by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State and those expressed in the telegram from the Government of India. If there was a divergence and he did not admit it—it was due to the difficulties experienced by the Government of India in making the inquiries to which he had referred. That telegram did not necessarily close the discussion. It did not mean that they had done more than propose to the Secretary of State certain things. It did not follow that the difficulties experienced by the Government of India were either permanent or fundamental. Every endeavour would be made by the Government of India and by the Government at home to remove any obstacle which might be found to lie in their path in carrying out the pledges which had been given to the House. It was quite impossible, looking at the different conditions which were found in every province, to set up rules for elections which should be uniform and identical.... Wherever elections were found to be possible they would be conducted on the basis of

separate representation for the Mahommedan community. (Times report, 27th April).

While personally favouring the inclusion in the Bill of some such express provision for separate Moslem representation as the amendment proposed, Mr. Balfour suggested the withdrawal of the motion, in view of the satisfactory undertaking with which Mr. Hobhouse had concluded his speech. The amendment was accordingly withdrawn, and the Bill passed from the effective control of the House of Commons on the express understanding that 'wherever elections were found to be possible they would be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mahommedan community.'

YET ANOTHER WITHDRAWAL

After the Commons' amendments had been considered in the House of Lords on 4th May, Lord Curzon asked the Secretary of State to amplify the information previously given as to the Mahommedan position and to make it clear that in no respect was there cause to fear that the pledges which had been given did not still hold good. In reply Lord Morley read the text of a private telegram he had received from the Viceroy on the previous day, to the following effect :

Hobhouse's speech has been interpreted as meaning that major portion of representation accorded to Mahommedans is to be given through the mixed electorates, such as district boards and municipalities, on which they will vote conjointly with other classes, and that the special electorates in which Mahommedans will vote separately are only intended to supplement general elections, and will carry only a small number of seats. I need hardly say that this is not at all what we contemplated. Our intention was that Mahommedans should have, by means of separate electorates, a number of seats closely approaching that to which their numerical proportion in the population would entitle them, and that over and above this they would obtain some seats in mixed electorates such as district boards and municipalities, Universities, Presidency corporations, and as Landholders. In Bombay, for example, under the scheme detailed in my telegram of 8th February four seats are specially assigned to Mahommedans, and in addition to these, two Mahommedans will be elected by landholders and district bodies of Sind, so that they will secure a certain minimum of 6, or 28 per cent, their ratio to the general population being only 20. In the United Provinces, where they number only 14 per cent, they will have four special seats, or nearly 20 per cent of the seats assigned for election. Of course, the same ratio cannot be applied in all provinces, and allowance must be made for the status, character, and educational attainments of Mahommedan population in each case. There has also been misapprehension of our views regarding nomination, which are intended to be merely a temporary expedient to be resorted to until the community should be ripe for election. I do not understand any Mahommedan here to claim concession suggested—namely, that wherever elections are

found possible they should be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mahommedan community. If interpreted literally, that would involve having separate Mahommedan electorates within the various electorates proposed, such as Presidency corporations, district boards, and municipalities, Universities, landholders, and the commercial community. This is manifestly impracticable. It could only be effected by recasting the entire scheme and increasing maximum strength of all councils as fixed by Bill. On the whole case, my view is that present proposals as now explained do reasonably fulfil pledges given to Mahommedans.

A communique of similar purport was issued to the Press of India.

Thus, at the moment when the Indian Councils Bill passed from the control of Parliament, there were made public proposals constituting further variation, as the Moslem League contends, from repeated assurances of separate representation in all stages and in excess of numerical proportion. How His Excellency can have regarded this latest scheme as 'reasonably fulfilling the pledges given to the Mahommedans' it is difficult to see. It is clear on the face of the telegram that the Viceroy has been misinformed. His statement that he does not understand any Mahommedans in India to have claimed concession of separate representation wherever elections are found possible is at variance with constant and emphatic declarations made by the Leagues and leading members of the community in India, including representations and telegrams addressed to the Indian authorities, and some of which have been officially published (vide *the Reform Blue Books*, Vol. II). The Mahommedans are well aware that the principle referred to would involve having separate Mahommedan electorates 'within the various electorates proposed', and this is what they have understood was promised them throughout. His Excellency declares such a method to be impracticable, and says it could only be effected by recasting the entire scheme and increasing the maximum strength on all Councils as fixed by the Bill. In the annexure to the representation submitted to the Secretary of State by the deputation of 27th January a scheme of representation was outlined; the London Branch submits that this was entirely practicable, and certainly would not involve the recasting of the Reform scheme as a whole, nor the increase of the maximum strength of the Councils. Such increase would indeed be deprecated by the community as affecting its ratio of representation and thus tending to take away with one hand what had been given them by the other.

THE ALLEGED CONCURRENCE OF MOSLEMS

By way of supporting the method of meeting Moslem claims outlined in the telegram published on 4th May, a number of communications appeared in Anglo-Indian and Home Journals asserting that 'the Government of India have not wavered in their original plan, which holds the field' and that 'the mischievous suggestion of electoral colleges in Lord Morley's despatch caused such trouble as has arisen' (Simla correspondent of *The Times*, 4th May). The

Times of India, of 23th April published a telegram from its Simla correspondent stating that the scheme Mr. Hobbhouse outlined in the House of Commons on 19th April, was identical with the proposal of the Government of India given in the despatch of 1st October.

The sequence of events in this connection is that the Government of India proposed this arrangement in Mahommedan interests and that the Secretary of State put forward a modification of it, which was unfavourably received by the Mahommedans, and that in deference of Mahommedan representations the original arrangement has now been reverted to.

With reference to these statements it should be noted that the London Moslem League in the representation submitted, to Lord Morley on the 25th January, which expressed the general consensus of Mahommedan opinion, distinctly pronounced against the arrangements proposed by the Government of India. The statement that in deference to Mahommedan representations the original arrangement has now been reverted to proceeds upon a complete misapprehension of the Mussulman attitude.

In order, however, to impress upon the British public the mistaken view of the case above referred to, a further extract from Lord Minto's teglegram of 2nd May has been published as a White Paper (10th May). It cites an isolated passage from a letter addressed to the Viceroy on behalf of a special sub-committee of the All-India Moslem League (Aligarh), dated the 4th of February. This letter (published in full in the newspapers at the time) deals with a variety of subjects; it welcomes the 'Reforms', expresses relief at Lord Morley's declarations to the Moslem deputation of the 27th January with regard 'to class representation as it affects the Mahommedans of India', states that his Lordship's 'pronouncement with respect to exclusive Mussulman electoral colleges had been read by Mahommedans with much thankfulness', and reiterates with much emphasis the Mahommedan objections to mixed electorates, as members returned by those bodies 'would only be mandatories and nominees of a non-Moslem majority.' It suggests that 'the denominational element should be carried down to the very base', but waives it in the last stage, viz., the case of the members returned to the Councils (this position was afterwards abandoned); and submits that 'whereas the effective class representation of Mahommedans is impossible, without giving them separate electorates from beginning to end', the last suggestion would avoid the possibility of political isolation between them and their non-Moslem fellow-countrymen. It then goes on to add 'that if the full due of the Mahommedans as to number of seats in the Councils can be secured to them by means of separate and denominational electorates, of which the Mahommedan section of the rural and municipal boards may form parts, the Mahommedans have no desire to court the resentment of their non-Moslem countrymen to vote again on the same boards for the purposes of returning members to the Councils.' The passage which has been furnished to the Viceroy for defeating the Mahommedan claims and upsetting the solemn pledges to them is merely

incidental. It refers to the proposals made by the Government of India in the despatch of 1st October; and states that the arrangements were in keeping with the maintenance of 'the principle of effective Mahommedan representation'; that the community was under a heavy debt of gratitude to his Excellency for the despatch; and that unless the reform scheme was carried on the 'principles laid down in that document, its grateful acceptance by the Mahommedans or any other minority, great or small' could not be foretold. The telegram of the Viceroy added :

These views were shared by the Deccan Moslem League, Bombay, and the Madras Presidency Moslem League also intimated general approval. In fact the Government of India have received no representations from Mahommedans taking exception to any essential feature of proposals made in their despatch.

With regard to the attitude of these two Leagues there is evidently a grave misapprehension, for on the 12th of February the Deccan League, and on the 14th March, and again so recently as the 27th April (barely a fortnight before the Viceroy's telegram), the Madras League emphatically and unequivocally condemned mixed electorates. (See Appendix.)*

The most extraordinary feature in this eventful episode of British rule in India is the fact that resolutions adopted in Mussulman meetings, though telegraphed to the Viceroy, do not appear to reach him.

THE ISOLATED QUOTATION

In considering the bearing of the telegraphed extract from a letter submitted to the Government of India more than three months ago it is important to remember the sequence of events. The great and overwhelming anxiety of the Moslem community at that time was to obtain a reversal of Lord Morley's plan of mixed electoral colleges. Lord Morley had received the deputation of the London Branch a few days before; but the full text of his speech had not reached India, and all that was in possession of the public there was a meagre and not very clear summary of his Lordship's remarks. Those remarks left it still an open question whether mixed electoral colleges would not be adopted; and in the circumstances the League in India was apparently advised to press for adhesion to the principles of the despatch of 1st October. The Government of India had, in fact, reaffirmed the principles to which Lord Minto originally gave adhesion in October 1906, and the Secretary of State's plan would have constituted a departure from them. In pressing for adherence to those principles the Moslem League certainly did not commit itself to an acceptance of all details of the despatch of 1st October.

The extensions and additions made in the general plan of the Government of India by the Secretary of State—extensions giving the Councils fuller powers, greatly increasing their maximum strength, dispensing with official majorities in the provincial Legislatures, and in many other ways adding to the vital necessity for safeguarding the rights of minorities—profoundly affected

* The Appendix has not been provided in this selection.

the details of application and the general structure of the Reforms.

The situation was further changed when on 23rd February (nearly three weeks after the letter quoted by the Viceroy had been submitted by the special sub-Committee of the League) Lord Morley accepted 'the Mahommedan demand'—voiced as insistently in India as in this country— for 'election of their own representatives to these councils in all stages', and 'a number of seats in excess of their numerical strength.' These pledges, combined with the drastic changes in the general framework of Reforms, made obsolete in no small measure the detailed proposals of the despatch of 1st October. To these the Government of India may be wedded; but it is not fair or just, on the strength of an isolated passage of a letter written long before Lord Morley's pledges were made, and in the face of the overwhelming Mahommedan opinion which has so strongly and insistently expressed itself all over the country, to claim that they have the entire acquiescence of the Indian Mahommedans. The appendices show that, whether here or in India, the Mahommedans will be satisfied with nothing else than a full and generous discharge of the pledges given first by Lord Minto then by Lord Morley, and repeated time after time on their behalf in the House of Commons. Not only so, it can be shown that the scheme set forth in the Viceroy's telegram does not correspond in every detail with the plan of 1st October, as the Government of India supposes. But into this aspect of the question it is not necessary now to enter.

SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL DECLARATIONS

It has been deemed desirable to trace in some detail the varying and conflicting official declarations whereby the Mahommedans of India, have been alternately gratified and disappointed, relieved and perplexed, and molified and dismayed, and to show the justification that exists for the terms of the resolutions of the London Branch, dated 6th and 13th May, given in the Appendices. It only remains in conclusion to present a bird's eye view of the many widenings of the path along which the Mahommedans have been led to the mirage of varying systems of representation only partially meeting their needs. They feel that the pledges given to them have been set aside, and that their interests have been subordinated to the clamour of a hostile agitation; and they ask for justice even now at the eleventh hour.

Here is the extraordinary record :

1906

Oct. 1 The Viceroy expresses to a representative Moslem deputation his hearty concurrence in the view that in any system of representation whether to a municipality, a district board or a legislature the Mahommedans should be represented as a community, and says that their interests shall be safeguarded in any administrative reconstruction in which he is concerned.

1907

Aug. 24 In adumbrating a draft scheme of Reforms the Government of India quote and reaffirm this pledge.

1908

Oct. 1 In submitting a revised plan to the Secretary of State the Government of India intimate that all the Local Governments approve of their proposals for the special representation of Mahommedans, and they propose separate Mahommedan electorates as the normal and desirable method.

Nov. 27 Lord Morley suggests to the Government of India, in substitution of their proposal, a plan of mixed electoral-colleges on a strictly numerical basis.

Dec. 17 The two despatches aforementioned are published, and immediately the Mahommedan community protests against the mixed electoral colleges as failing to fulfil the pledges of the Viceroy.

1909

Jan. 27 Lord Morley receives a Moslem deputation and promises consideration of their claims as to separate electorates and representation in excess of strict numerical proportion. The deputation suggests exclusively Mahommedan electoral college. The Secretary of State accepts the idea.

Feb. 23 Lord Morley informs the House of Lords that these two demands he is ready and intends to meet in full. Hostile agitation on the part of Hindu politicians and their helpers in this country ensues.

Apr. 1 The Prime Minister and the Under-Secretary of State for India assure the House of Commons that there will be no going back on the pledges given to the Mahommedans. But the Under-Secretary in stating details, speaks of the representation being carried out in different ways in different provinces, and of a numerical minimum in certain provinces so small that it is held by the Mahommedan leaders to fail to constitute a complete and genuine fulfilment of the pledges.

Apr. 19 The Secretary to the Treasury, in the absence of Mr. Buchanan, reads to the House of Commons a telegram from the Viceroy stating that 'in general electorates... all sects and classes, including Mahommedans, will vote together', and that in addition a certain number of seats would be reserved for Mahommedans. This announcement, indicating, as was supposed, abandonment of separate Moslem electorates as the normal state of things, causes bitter disappointment.

Apr. 26 Mr. Hobhouse tells the House of Commons that the telegram had been misunderstood, and promises 'that every endeavour will be made by the Government of India and by the Government at home to remove any sort or kind of obstacle which may be found to lie within our power to the carrying out of the pledges which have been given before this House,' and that 'wherever elections are found to be possible they

will be conducted on the basis of separate representation for the Mahommedan community.'

May 4 Lord Morley, asked by Lord Curzon for further information, just after the House of Lords had accepted the Commons' amendments to the Councils Bill, and the measure was no longer under the effective control of Parliament, produces a telegram from the Viceroy alleging that the Mahommedans in India had not asked for separate electorates wherever found possible; that this would be impracticable and involve the recasting of the entire scheme of reforms; and that a scheme partly of special and partly of mixed electorates would 'reasonably fulfil the pledges given.'

May 10 The Secretary of State presents to Parliament a further extract from the Viceroy's telegram, citing an isolated passage in a detailed representation made by a Special Sub-Committee of the All-India Moslem League, with the object apparently of suggesting that the plan outlined in the original part of the telegram has the approval of the Indian Mahommedans. As the special object of the letter in question was to press for abandonment of the plan of mixed electoral colleges, and as Lord Morley had not then given his specific pledges on the subject, the letter does not afford the evidence suggested. The appendices show that demands of the Moslem community have been insistent, consistent and clear.

Source : Pamphlet issued by the All-India Moslem League, London Branch, 28 May 1909.

68

GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON MOSLEMS AND THE REFORMS

The construction placed in the public press upon the recent discussion in the House of Commons has given rise to considerable misapprehension of the intention of the Government of India regarding the representation of Mahommedans. It seems to be supposed that the proposals contained in the despatch of 1st October are to be modified in a manner disadvantageous to Mahommedan interests. This impression is entirely erroneous. The Government of India have no intention of departing in any material respect from the arrangement outlined in their despatch, of which the special committee of the All-India Moslem League expressed their approval in a letter from their chairman which was forwarded officially to the Home Department so recently as the 4th February last. The Committee then said, 'this arrangement was in

keeping with the maintenance of the principle of effective Mahommedan representation and had also the virtue of linking various class interests together in the rural and territorial electorates. The Mahommedans are under a heavy debt of gratitude to Your Excellency and your Executive Council for the despatch which was characterised not only by farsighted statesmanship but had the great virtue of adjusting divergent claims and interests on considerate and equitable bases and unless in some form or other the reform scheme is carried out on the principles on which Your Excellency's despatch was based, I cannot fore tell its grateful acceptance by the Mahommedans or any other minority, great or small.' It has also been assumed that in connexion with Mahommedan representation, a more extensive use is to be made of nomination than is indicated in the despatch. For this assumption there is no foundation whatever. The Government of India adhere to the view expressed by them in October last that in provinces where election by a regular Mahommedan electorate is feasible, that method should be adopted, that Mahommedan associations should be made use of where electorates cannot be formed and that nomination by Government should be resorted to where neither of the first two methods is practicable. It will be for the local Government to determine, in consultation with the leaders of the Mahommedan community, which plan should be adopted. In other words nomination by the Government is intended to be merely a temporary expedient, which will be resorted to in those localities where the Mahommedan community are not sufficiently organised for election to be practicable and where representative Mahommedan associations have not been formed. It will, therefore, rest with the Mahommedans themselves to determine by what methods their representative on the councils should be appointed.

Source : The Pioneer, 6 May 1909.

69

LETTER FROM M. EHTISHAM ALI TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER

Mr. Ali Imam's letter which appeared in your issue of the 5th instant is of no practical importance in the sphere of Mahommedan politics, and merely purports to be a denial of his conversion to the Gokhale school. Without touching on the controversial aspect of the scheme advocated by him, I should like to point that the classes into which he has divided the Mahomedans, according to the varying shades of opinion held by them on the system of

representation in councils, have an existence in his brain only. The trend of general Mahommedan opinion on the question of their representation is thoroughly well known. A few Mahommedans there may be who have not the courage of their opinions, or who have to propitiate the Hindus to serve their own ends, but they do not count. I am afraid that Mr. Imam's letter might have the pernicious effect of creating a division where there is none. I would further venture to climb the height from' hich Mr. Imam seems to speak, and attempt to find out whether he can rightly pose as a Mahommedan representative, and how far he was justified in entering into the Bihar compromise on behalf of the Mahommedan community at large. In the absence of the President, His Highness the Aga Khan, Mr. Ali Imam was elected chairman of the meeting of the All-India Moslem League held at Amritsar last cold weather. He says in his letter that the Mahommedans, 'accepted his leadership with their eyes open.' By reason of his having seat in the presidential chair for three days he cannot assume the role of a leader, and the words do not sound well in his mouth. He had too exaggerated a sense of his own importance when he took upon himself to effect a compromise on behalf of his compatriots without consulting any of the leading members of the League, and his action was quite unauthorised. His pronouncements carry no other weight, than that of the expression of the personal views of a barrister, and as such they may be taken for what they are worth.

Source : The Pioneer, 13 May 1909.

70

LETTER FROM MINTO TO MORLEY

20 May 1909

That his telegram of 12th April was to Hobhouse, who did not know the whole story as intimately as Buchanan did. The pitch of our recommendations as to Mahommedan representation has always been separate Mahommedan electorates in the first place, which were to become for them their proper proportion of representation, and beyond that again was their chance of winning seats in the general electorates, and also nomination. But I feel my telegram puts the cart before the horse, and is badly worded, inasmuch as it would lead anyone not acquainted with the whole history to assume that Mahommedans must depend upon the general electorates in the first place, and that their own electorates would only give them a sort of second chance. What you were told, however, about the Mahommedans having all along

regarded the Government of India proposals as even worse than electoral colleges, was mere moonshine, and quite contrary to all our information here.

Source : Minto Papers : Letters to the Secretary of State for India, 1909.

71

THE EARL OF RONALDSHAY ON SEPARATE ELECTORATE FOR THE MUSLIMS

The Earl of Ronaldshay moved, in sub-section (1), after the words 'with regulations made under this Act,' to insert the words 'provided that the ratio of Mussulman and Hindu representation on all representative bodies, from the rural boards upwards to the Viceregal Council, be fixed by executive authority, and that in every case in which any seat on a representative body thus assigned to the Mahommedan community is to be filled by election, the necessary electorate be composed exclusively of Mahommedans.'

The object of moving this Amendment, as Hon. Members will see from the Paper, is to ensure the carrying out of a promise which was given to the Mahommedan community two and a-half years ago by the Viceroy, a promise which was subsequently reiterated and emphasised by the Secretary of State on the second reading of the Bill. The promise was to the effect that in the event of political privileges being extended to the peoples of India the Mahommedan community would be secured a share in those privileges commensurate not only with their numbers but with their historical and political importance. As to the methods by which it is proposed, or was proposed, to secure those ends, I shall have something to say in a moment, but I should like first of all to associate myself entirely with the Viceroy and the Government of India in their decision to grant to the Mahommedan community a share in those new privileges in excess of their actual numerical strength. The claim based upon historical reasons I do not think can be ignored. Hon. Members will recollect that it was from a Mahommedan sovereign that the East India Company acquired their rights in three of the richest provinces in India. It was a Mahommedan sovereign whose paramount influence was recognised by the East India Company, and many of the Hindu Chiefs are very proud of the titles presented to them by Mahommedan kings. The political importance of all this cannot be gainsaid, and in attempting to form a just estimate of the political importance of the Mahommedans we must cast our eyes far beyond the confines of the Indian Empire. We must remember that countries with whose destiny the destinies of our own country

as an Eastern Power are indissolubly woven—Afghanistan, Persia, and Turkey—are countries peopled by Mahommedans, and are centres of Mahommedan power. But the influence of Mahommedans does not stop there, for we find that this race spreads itself over Africa, Central Asia, and some parts of China. Therefore, upon historical and political grounds alone, Mahommedans have a just claim to a substantial share in any political privileges which may be granted to the peoples of India.

But there is a further reason why the Mahommedans should be granted representation in excess of their actual number, and I think it is one which will appeal to Hon. Members as having greater practical validity than those reasons which I have already mentioned The reason I allude to is that there are millions of people included for statistical purposes among the Hindus, who as a matter of fact, are not Hindus at all. If Hon. Members can bring themselves to delve into the Monstrous Blue Book presented by the India Office not very long ago—which, so far as arrangement is concerned, may be justly claimed to be the triumph of chaos over order—they will find the following memorial from the Dravidians to the Government of Madras :

'The differences between the Hindu and the community of the memorialists are so great that it is a deplorable mistake to regard them as forming a part of the Hindus. There has been existing for centuries enmity and hatred between their community and that of the Hindus.'

That is only a single example, but I think it shows that it would be absurd to class these men, who number something like one-sixth of the total population of Madras, among the Hindus for representation purposes, though I have no doubt they are classed amongst them by the statistician. I quite agree that it is a very difficult thing to arrive at any accurate conclusion as to what the number of this class may be. One authority estimates them at 5,00,00,000, while the statisticians of the India Office estimate them at 8,80,00,000. That is sufficient to show that it would be grievously unjust to the Mahommedans to base their amount of representation upon a purely numerical basis. That being so, and the Government having come to the conclusion that the Mahommedans ought to be granted representation in excess of their actual numbers, it remains to be decided how this change is to be brought about. Upon that point the Mahommedans themselves had, and still have, very distinct and definite ideas. They maintain, and I think they very justly maintain, that this need connot be supplied unless the Government accept two main principles, which are as follows : In the first place, the Mahommedans should be assigned a number of seats on the representative bodies in excess of their numerical strength, that number in all cases to be fixed by the Executive authority. The second principle is that whenever one of these seats assigned to the Mahommedans by Executive authority is to be filled by election the electorate should be composed exclusively of Mahommedans. I understand that the Government of India and the Government at home have accepted those two principles. I think the speech of the Viceroy

and the speech made on the second reading by the Secretary of State for India puts that matter absolutely beyond dispute. May I remind the House of the words used by the Viceroy two and a half years ago in replying to the Mahommedan deputation which waited upon him ? He said :

'The pitch of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that in any system of representation whether it affects a municipality, a District Board, or a Legislative Council, in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organisation, the Mahommedan community should be represented as a community, and you justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community, and the service it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you.'

That is a pretty definite expression of the Viceroy's opinion, and he was tirely in accord with the Mahommedan deputation when they demanded from him these two principles. The words of the Secretary of State were no less definite, indeed, I think, they were more definite, and I will therefore venture to read to the House the words used by the Secretary of State for India upon the second reading of this Bill in another place. He said :

'The Mahommedans demand three things. I had the pleasure of receiving a deputation from them, and I know very well what is in their minds. They demand the election of their own representatives to these councils in all the stages just as in Cyprus, where, I think, the Mahommedans vote by themselves.... Secondly they want a number of seats in excess of their numerical strength. Those two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet in full.'

I do not think even such a master of lucid explanation as the Prime Minister could have improved upon the lucidity of that pledge which was given by the Secretary of State for India in another place. It may be asked why, after those definite pledges, I should have thought it necessary to move my amendment. It is because something like consternation has been created in the minds of Mahommedans here and in India by the speech made in this House last week on the Committee stage of the Bill by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury. He read a telegram as to the methods by which it was proposed to secure elections to these various bodies, and the telegram read as follows : 'The method proposed is simply that in general electorates, such as municipalities, district boards, and members of provincial councils, all sects and classes, including Mahommedans, will vote together.' I ask the particular attention of Hon. Members to these words : 'All sects and classes, including Mahommedans, will vote together.' The words appear to me to constitute a direct reversal of the pledge given by the Viceroy. How the Government propose to reconcile their action with their promises passes my comprehension; but that is not all. The Hon. Gentleman went on to say, 'By this means some, but not sufficient, representation will be obtained for Mahommedans, and in addition a certain number of seats will be reserved

for the Mahommedans, and nobody but the Mahommedans.' That is in force at the present time. What does the Government of India say as to this system ? In a circular of 24th August 1907, paragraph 16, the Government of India said : 'Under the system of election hitherto in force, Hindus largely predominate in all, or almost all, the electorates, with the result that comparatively few Mahommedan members have been elected. These have been supplemented by nomination made by the Government.' But even so, 'the total representation thus effected has not been commensurate with the weight to which the Mahommedan community is entitled.' I should like to ask the Government how, by this mixed electorate, the Mahommedans will secure representation ? How do they know ? They do not know. They cannot know. If you take the United Provinces, in which there is a large and important Mahommedan community approximating 70,00,000 in number, you will find that under the system hitherto in force no single Mahommedan representative under a mixed electorate has ever found his way to a provincial council. May I take the case of proposed reconstituted council of the Viceroy as an example ? As I understand it from the information at our disposal, there are 28 seats to be filled under a mixed electorate. The Government of India tell us that under a mixed electorate Mahommedans will secure 12 per cent of the seats on the legislative council. If the system works as the Government think it will work, the Mahommedans may possibly get seven elected members out of the 28 elected members. No one would regard that number as an adequate representation for the Mahommedans, still less as an adequate representation if they are promised to have a representation in excess of their numbers. May I add that the leaders of Mahommedan thought would not recognise a representative who is elected by others than Mahommedans. Every Mahommedan would say that every elected person of an electorate not exclusively Mahommedan will not be in the least the sort of man to represent real Mahommedan interests. I have one other thing to say. What Mahommedans say is that as far as every elected Mahommedan is concerned they require an exclusively Mahommedan electorate, as promised by the Viceroy. If they receive that they are quite willing, and are even anxious, to forego the privilege of voting for the election of every other electoral body. They would be quite content to have their own members and elect their own members to the councils. If an Hon. Member thinks that I have put an exaggerated case, or that I have said more than is really in the minds of the Mahommedan leaders, I ask his careful attention to this cable from India, which was received during the past week in reply to a speech of the Financial Secretary of the Treasury. *The Times* Correspondent at Lucknow cables as follows :

'The Mahommedans are indignant at what they conceive to be the violation of the pledges given by Lord Minto and Lord Morley guaranteeing separate electorates. They consider Mr. Hobhouse's statement in the House to mean that the Government accepts Mr. Gokhale's proposals, which would

virtually place the Mahommedans absolutely in Hindu hands. Under mixed general electorates Congress Mahommedans will be freely elected to count as genuine Mahommedan representatives. Mahommedans protest against the surrender of their rights at the dictation of political agitators and are demanding separate electorates throughout.'

I commend these words also to the attention of Hon. Members :

'Meetings of protest have been arranged every-where.' This telegram was dated 21st April.

The second telegram to which I will call attention is from a Mahommedan of great influence amongst his co-religionists in India, a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council and one of the leading Talukdars of Oudh (Rajah of Mahmudabad), and this telegram is as follows :

'Protest against supplementary election. Demand separate electorate, otherwise reforms useless.'

And the third telegram is also from a Mahommedan of influence (Nawab of Dacca), and his telegram reads as follows :

'A mass meeting of 6,000 Mahommedans held here under my presidentship, three resolutions passed : the first opposing nomination, the second insisting upon separate election, and the third upon representation in excess of numerical proportion.'

I think anybody who reads these telegrams, which are the result of the speech of the Hon. Gentleman last week, must realise that the Mahommedans throughout India are at present suffering under a sense of grevious wrong and of grevious injustice. They consider that the pledges which were given to them in the most explicit language by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State are being broken. And may I say this, in conclusion, that I personally have to desire whatsoever to identify myself with one of the great communities of India rather than with another. I have no reasons for espousing the cause of the Mahommedans except this, that I believe, in the first place, that their demands are not only just, but that they are expedient under the present circumstances; I believe, in the second place, that the Government have told them that they intend to meet the two demands to the full; and, thirdly, I espouse their cause on this occasion because I foresee that if the Government of this country follow on a course which is in any way calculated to shake the faith of any great community in India in the inviolability of their pledged word they are going far to undermine the whole fabric of British supremacy in India.

Source : Parliamentary Debates (Official Reports), Fourth Volume of Session from 26 April 1909 to 14 May 1909.

72

EXTRACTS
THE INDIAN COUNCILS ACT, 1909

1. (*i*) The additional members of the Councils for the purpose of making laws and regulations (hereinafter referred to as Legislative Councils) of the Governor-General and of the Governors of Fort St. George and Bombay, and the members of Legislative Councils already constituted, or which may hereafter be of constituted, of the several Lieutenant-Governors of Provinces, instead of being all nominated by the Governor-General, Governor, or Lieutenant-Governor in manner provided by the Indian Councils Acts, 1861 and 1892, shall include members so nominated and also members elected in accordance with regulations made under this act, and references in those Acts to the members so nominated and their nomination shall be constructed as including references to the members so elected and their election.

(*ii*) The number of additional members or members so nominated and elected, the number of such members required to constitute a quorum, the term of office of such members and the manner of filling up casual vacancies, occurring by reason of absence from India, inability to attend to duty, death acceptance of office, or resignation duly accepted, or otherwise, shall, in the case of each such Council, be such as may be prescribed by regulations made under this Act :

Provided that the aggregate number of members so nominated and elected shall not, in the case of any Legislative Council mentioned in the first column of the First Schedule to this Act, exceed the number specified in the second column of that schedule.

2. (*i*) The number of ordinary members of the Councils of the Governors of Fort St. George and Bombay shall be such number not exceeding four as the Secretary of State in Council may from time to time direct, of whom two at least shall be persons who at the time of their appointment have been in the service of the Crown in India for at least twelve years.

(*ii*) If at any meeting of either of such Councils there is an equality of votes on any question, the Governor or other person presiding shall have two votes or the casting vote.

3. (*i*) It shall be lawful for the Governor-General in Council, with the approval of the Secretary of State in Council, by proclamation, to create a Council in the Bengal Division of the Presidency of Fort William for the purpose of assisting the Lieutenant-Governor in the Executive Government of the province, and by such proclamation :

(*a*) To make provision for determining what shall be the number (not exceeding four) and qualifications of the members of the Council; and

(*b*) to make provision for the appointment of temporary or acting

members of the Council during the absence of any member from illness or otherwise, and for the procedure to be adopted in case of difference of opinion between a Lieutenant-Governor and his Council and in the case of equality of votes, and in the case of a Lieutenant-Governor being obliged to absent himself from his Council from indisposition or any other cause.

(*ii*) It shall be lawful for the Governor-General-in-Council, with the like approval, by a like proclamation, to create a Council in any other province under a Lieutenant-Governor for the purpose of assisting the Lieutenant-Governor in the executive government of the province : Provided that before any such proclamation is made a draft thereof shall be laid before each House of Parliament for not less than sixty days during the session of Parliament, and, if before the expiration of that time an Address is presented to His Majesty by either House of Parliament against the draft or any part thereof, no further proceedings shall be taken thereon, without prejudice to the making of any new draft.

(*iii*) Where any such proclamation has been made with respect to any province the Lieutenant-Governor may, with the consent of the Governor-General-in-Council, from time to time make rules and orders for the more convenient transaction of business in his Council, and any order made or act done in accordance with the rules and orders so made shall be deemed to be an act or order of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

(*iv*) Every member of any such Council shall be appointed by the Governor-General with the approval of His Majesty, and shall, as such, be a member of the Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor, in addition to the members nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor and elected under the provisions of this Act.

4. The Governor-General and the Governors of Fort St. George and Bombay, and the Lieutenant-Governor of every province respectively, shall appoint a member of their respective Councils to the Vice-President thereof, and, for the purpose of temporarily holding and executing the office of the Governor-General or Governor of Fort St. George or Bombay and of presiding at meetings of Council in the absence of the Governor-General, Governor or Lieutenant-Governor, the Vice-President so appointed shall be deemed to be the senior member of Council and the member highest in rank, and the Indian Councils Act 1861, and sections sixty-two and sixty-three of the Government of India Act 1833, shall have effect accordingly.

5. (*i*) Notwithstanding anything in the Indian Councils Act 1861, the Governor-General-in-Council, the Governors-in-Council of Fort St. George and Bombay respectively, and the Lieutenant-Governor or Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council of every province, shall make rules authorizing at any meeting of their respective Legislative Councils and discussions of the annual financial statement of the Governor-General-in-Council or of their respective Local Governments, as the case may be, and of any matter of general public interest and the asking of questions, under such conditions and restrictions as

may be prescribed in the rules applicable to the several Councils.

(*ii*) Such rules as aforesaid may provide for the appointment of a member of any such Council to preside at any such discussion in the place of the Governor-General, Governor, or Lieutenant-Governor, as the case may be, and of any Vice-President.

(*iii*) Rules under this section, where made by a Governor-in-Council, or by a Lieutenant-Governor, or a Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, shall be subject to the sanction of the Governor-General-in-Council, and where made by the Governor-General-in-Council shall be subject to the sanction of the Secretary of State-in-Council, and shall not be subject to alteration or amendment by the Legislative Council or the Governor-General, Governor or Lieutenant-Governor.

6. The Governor-General-in-Council shall, subject to the approval of the Secretary of State in Council, make regulations as to the conditions under which the manner in which persons resident in India may be nominated or elected as members of the Legislative Councils of the Governor-General, Governors, and Lieutenant-Governors, and as to the qualifications for being, and for being nominated or elected, a member of any such Council, and as to any other matter for which regulations are authorised to be made under this Act, and also as to the manner in which those regulations are to be carried into effect. Regulations under this section shall not be subject to alteration or amendment by the Legislative Council of the Governor-General.

7. All proclamation, regulations, and rules made under this Act, other than rules made by a Lieutenant-Governor for the more convenient transaction of business in his Council, shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament as soon as may be after they are made.

8. (*iii*) The enactments mentioned in Second Schedule to this Act are hereby repealed to the extent mentioned in the third column of that schedule.

FIRST SCHEDULE

MAXIMUM NUMBERS OF NOMINATED AND ELECTED MEMBERS OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS

Legislative Council	Maximum Number
Legislative Council of Governor-General	60
Legislative Council of the Governor of Fort St. George	50
Legislative Council of the Governor of Bombay	50
Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Bengal Division of the Presidency of Fort William	50
Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh	50
Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Provinces of the Eastern Bengal and Assam	50
Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Provinces of the Punjab	30
Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Burma	30
Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of any Province which may hereafter be constituted	30

73

LETTER FROM TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU TO THE TRIBUNE OI 'A CALL OF HINDU LEADERS'

The last meeting of the All-India Moslem League at Lucknow once again demonstrates the utter hollowness of all talk about compromise between the Hindus and the Mahommedans in the matter of political representation. To me it has not come as a surprise that Mr. Ali Imam who was a party to the compromise at Bankipur should now propose the resolution expressing dissatisfaction with the arrangement announced by the Government and again demand separate representation all through and press for representation in excess of the numerical strength of his community on the favourite ground of its political incompetence. We may witness yet another attempt at reconciliation of divergent views expressed at Bhagalpur and Lucknow. You may expect a man to be reasonable or consistent but you cannot compel him to be so. Will the Hindus even now awaken to their sense of duty towards themselves, towards their past, and towards their future ? That is the question which, it seems to me, ought to attract the notice of every Hindu who has got a mind to think, and courage to speak out. How long are we going to cry hoarse over the painful prospect of separation ? And how do we propose to prevent separation ? It seems to me that the Hindus should not trouble themselves about separation. That is to be, and let be so. But if separate electorates are to be the new feature of representation, should we also accept without demur the new fangled doctrine of representation according to political importance ? I am clearly of opinion that we should not, and that is our duty to enter our firm protest against it. It is one of the most mischievous political doctrines that is being preached and that has now got the hallmark of official recognition. It may be a very good for the time being, it cannot be a permanent principle of administration and ought not to be allowed to be so. Its real mischief lies not so much in its immediate effect as in the possibilities which it suggests.

We, of the United Provinces, will be the most affected by this new doctrine. In East Bengal and the Punjab, the Mahommedans predominate, and there they would fare well enough even without this advantagious aid. In Madras and Bombay the Mahommedans are too much scattered to count for anything very substantial. In these Provinces Mahommedans come up to about six millions and it is clear that upon this theory one-seventh of the population is going to receive special treatment at the expense of the rest for each single seat reserved for special community in excess of what is due to it proportionally is so much loss to the general public.

Well, nobody can object to the Government protecting a minority, but that obligation does not carry with it the further responsibility of displeasing

an overwhelming majority. That the Hindus will be displeased if this theory of political importance is accepted in practice, I have no doubt. It would not be honest to conceal the true feeling; but unfortunately the Hindus feel that they lack that encouragement and support which is at present inspirng the Mahommedans to so much activity. Support or no support, however, the Hindus must do their duty. Will the Hindu aristocracy—or to use the new official phrase—'the natural leaders of the people' now come forward and declare unequivocally what they and their fellow religionists think and feel about the matter? Will they take a leaf out of the book of the Mahommedan aristocracy? Or are they 'leaders' only for the purpose of organising demonstration of 'loyalty' and heading deputations? Will they come forward and cooperate with the people now? If they will not, I think the educated community and the middle classes should take up the matter in hand without them and make a clear declaration on the subject. In marked contrast to Mahommedan activity, is Hindu inactivity, and if the Hindus do not get what they want and what they should have, they will have themselves to blame for it. What is just now wanted is an authoritative statement of the Hindu position signed by leading Hindus in these Provinces, and this, to my mind, is by no means difficult. Let us even now put our case before the Government and the English people, and then if we lose we shall at least have the satisfaction that we tried and lost which is certainly better than never trying at all. It is never to late.

Source: The Tribune, 3 June 1909.

74

LETTER FROM A MAHOMMEDAN TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING ALL-INDIA MOSLEM LEAGUE AND THE REFORMS

I have read with deep concern the proceedings of the meeting of the All-India Moslem League which was held at Lucknow on the 23rd instant. Besides this I have also read various reports that have appeared every now and then in different papers regarding the Mahommedan representation in the new Council scheme. I did not like to say anything uptil now. But from the proceedings of the Lucknow, Moslem League intend to approach, not only the Government of India, but the Secretary of State for India as well. Before any attention is paid by the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India to the representation submitted to them, I venture to ask

the following few questions to the President of the League, through your valuable and widely circulated paper : (1) Will the President of the League be pleased to give the names of the members who attended the meeting with the names of the various bodies which they might have represented. (As for me, allow me to tell you that I am one of the leading members of my community as well as a public man, but I don't know by whom the representatives have been elected. I believe they have been elected either after the fashion of the Khedivial Parliament or they might have been self-elected or elected by those who knew next to nothing about the reform scheme). (2) Do the Mahommedans require greater rights in the reform scheme as the subjects of His Majesty the King-Emperor or as the Mahommedans as such ? (3) How do they occupy a position different from other communities ? (4) Is there no other community holding the same position as that of the Mahommedans to be treated similarly ? (5) Have not the Parsees, Sikhs, Anglo-Indians, Eurasians, got their own traditions to put forth ? (6) On what legal grounds do the Mahommedans ask the Government to extend them special rights ?

I, on my part, beg to draw the attention of both the Governments to the recent reforms given to the Turkish subjects consisting of various creeds and classes. In Turkey nobody asks for special privileges like the League, which in no way befits the Mahommedans of India and their traditions. Let me tell you that the meeting did not at all represent all the Mahommedans of India. In conclusion I agree with the remarks of Lord Curzon that the new reforms would render the administration more arduous and more difficult, not for the reason his lordship says, but by giving separate and special rights to any sect of the subjects of His Majesty the King-Emperor as such.

Source : The Pioneer, 4 June 1909.

75

LETTER FROM MINTO TO MORLEY
1 July 1909

I had invited some of the Mahommedan leaders to Simla for an informal interview with my councils committee. They have come and gone with the result that they have practically accepted our scheme provided that we can give them 6 fixed seats on the Imperial Council instead of 5. We shall have no difficulty in satisfying them as to this, and they left here with the intention of urging upon their communities that the principles of entire Mahommedan separation should not be pressed as to which they seemed to

apprehend no serious opposition. Amongst other points, none of them at all vital, they asked that separate seats should be given to Madras and Bombay—also that Government should nominatea Mahommedan for the N. W. F. Province and Baluchistan, but that this should not be embodied in the Regulations but should be left to the discretion of Government.... I have a long talk...with three of them viz., Mr. Ali Imam of the All-India Moslem League, the Hon'ble Mr. Rahimatullah of the Bombay Legislative Council and Mr. Abdul Majid of Allahabad. Ali Imam was the Chief spokesman and was strongly against separate electorate alone, the other supporting them. I told them that, when I replied to the Mahommedan deputation (1906) and agreed with them as to the principle of communal representation, it had never for a moment occurred to me that I was pledging them for all time to confinement in water tight compartments shut off from the public life of the country, that I had only accepted the principle generally when the reform movement was in a fluid state and when no scheme was before Government or the public. They agreed with me absolutely, Ali Imam stating most strongly that in their view a policy which would deprive them of taking their own part in open political competition would be suicidal to the future interests of their community. They only wanted a fair number of fixed seats allotted to them (*i. e.* 6 in Imperial Council) and were prepared to fight for the rest or to rely upon us for nomination by which means they counted upon getting 3 beyond their fixed seats. I was immensely impressed with their good sense. They laughingly admitted that their representatives in England were evidently quite ignorant of worked out numerical proportion.... The men who came here were thoroughly representative and I confess I am pleased a little too because I have always told you that our best Mahommedan opinion was not in accord with the vapourings of Ameer Ali.

Source : Minto Papers : Letters from the Secretary of State, 1909.

76

LETTER FROM MAULVI RAFIUDDIN AHMED TO SIR HERBERT RISLEY, HOME SECRETARY GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

I beg to draw the attention of His Excellency the Viceroy to a misunderstanding which has arisen into the minds of a considerable number of Indian Mahommedans, owing to the ambiguity of an expression in His Excellency's telegram to the Secretary of State of the 3rd of May last. The

words used are, if interpreted literally. 'That would involve having separate Mahommedan electorates within the various electorates proposed such as presidency corporation, district boards, municipalities, universities, land-holders and the commercial community. This is manifestly impracticable.' These are generally construed to mean that the Government of India no longer intend to give separate electorates to Mahommedans in district boards and municipalities. Personally I think such a construction of the sentence to be impossible, because that would mean the virtual withdrawal of the definite promise given to Mahommedans on the subject by His Excellency in his reply to the Mahommedan deputation of 1906 of which I had the honour to be a member. Nevertheless since a widespread anxiety prevails among Mahommedans, I am sure it would be a source of great satisfaction to them should His Excellency graciously remove existing doubts upon the subject by assuring the community that the telegram in question referred solely to council electorates and not to elections of municipalities and district boards.

Source : The Pioneer, 8 July 1909.

77

LETTER FROM ALI IMAM TO DUNLOP SMITH

14 July 1909

An urgent meeting of the All-India Moslem League was called at Lucknow on 10th or 11th of July on his and Viqar-ul-Mulk's request. An informal meeting was held at the house of Raja Naushad Ali Khan in the afternoon, and Syed Ali Imam and Mr. Abdul Majid who had returned from seeing the Viceroy explained various circumstances which had a strong bearing on the present Mahommedan position. In all 26 members assembled. They were from East Bengal, Bengal, Bihar, the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, the Punjab, the N. W. F. Province. Hon'ble Nawab Ali Chaudhry was voted to the Chair. The following resolutions were passed :

(1) That the Mahommedans should have no less than 6 seats to them to be filled in by purely Mahommedan electorates, so that at least one representative of that community from every one of the larger provinces of Bombay, Madras, East Bengal, Bengal, the United Provinces, Punjab should always have a place in the Imperial Council.

(2) That out of the 12 representatives to be elected by the non-official members of the Legislative Councils of the 6 provinces mentioned above, at least 2, 1 from the Punjab and the other from the East Bengal, should be

returnable, in view of the preponderance of Moslem population in these two provinces on the strength of an absolute majority of Mahommedan votes over non-Moslem votes.

Mr. Ali Imam in a memorandum sent to Viceroy wrote :

1. That the Mahommedans should have no less than 6 seats allotted to them to be filled in by purely Mahommedan electorate, so that at least one representative of that community from every one of the larger provinces of Bombay, Madras, East Bengal, Bengal, the United Provinces and Punjab should always have a place in the Imperial Council.

2. That considering the representation from among the landholders of Punjab and Bombay by mixed electorate is calculated to leave the Hindu landlords of these two provinces in a permanent minority, and that similarly such representation is calculated to leave the Mahommedan landlords in East Bengal and the United Provinces in a like permanent minority, and that in as much as the social relations of landlords in these four provinces necessitates the representation to be on a more harmonious basis, the 2 seats returnable by Mahommedans may be as arranged as to be taken in rotation by the landholders of the four provinces of the Punjab, Bombay, East Bengal and the United Provinces.

Source : Minto Papers : Letters to Secretary of State for India, 1909.

78

LETTER FROM MAHOMED RAHMAT ULLAH TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING MOSLEM LEAGUE AT LUCKNOW

As various accounts are appearing in papers regarding the meeting of the All-India Moslem League, that was to be held at Lucknow on the 10th and 11th July, and this must be causing a good deal of anxiety in the minds of those concerned, it would not be out of place for me, as one who went to attend the proposed meeting, to give a true and faithful account of what happened at Lucknow.

It was at about the end of the first week of this month, when it was notified in papers that an urgent meeting of the All-India Moslem League was to take place at Lucknow on the 10th and 11th instant. The members of the League were not, however, informed of the circumstances under which such a step was thought necessary, nor was any detailed communication received by the members from the Secretary of the League on the subject; and no Agenda, as required by the constitution of the League, issued. A

telegram from the Secretary of the League was received a few days before the date fixed for the meeting, which gave no information as to the objects of the meeting or as to the authority under which he had taken upon himself to convene a meeting. The result of such a short and vague notice was that only a small number of members arrived at Lucknow to take part in the meeting on the 10th and 11th July. Mr. Ali Imam and Mr. Abdul Majid, two of the gentlemen who had been to Simla, gave an account of the discussions they had there with regard to Muslim representation. Mr. Ali Imam stated that, after giving the matter due consideration, he was convinced that, though there should be certain seats separately allotted to Mahommedans, they should not refuse to take part in the mixed electorate, as there was a fair chance for some Mahommedan member being returned in that way also, and moreover it would give some control over the elections of the members belonging to other communities. Upon this it was asked by some of the members, present, whether the London Branch of the League, and all the other members of the League were informed and consulted in the matter. But while the discussion was going on, it was found that the attendance was so poor that even the necessary quorum could not be formed. There upon, telegrams were sent to some of the members in the neighbouring districts, pointing out to them that in order to complete the quorum it was necessary that they should come. Such being the case some of the members suggested that, considering that for want of sufficient information as to the objects of the meeting, and also owing to a very short notice, members were unable to turn up, and also since our London branch had not been consulted over the scheme alluded to above, it would not be advisable to hold any meeting at all.

Mr. Ali Imam strongly opposed this suggestion and was strongly supported in his views by the contingent that had accompanied him from Bihar. On the morning of the 11th, some more members arrived, and among them Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk from Aligarh, but even then the number required to form a quorum was incomplete. Such being the position, the Secretary of the League, Mr. Haji Musa Khan, was closely questioned as to how he was going to convene the meeting, whether the Central Committee had under rule 23, clause (d), decided to hold this extra-ordinary meeting and whether he had sent the Agenda of the proposed meeting to the members of the League. His answers to both these questions were in the negative, and he pointed out that the meeting was called at the instance of Mr. Imam, supported by Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk. The venerable old Nawab began then to feel the gravity of the situation, and gave out strongly that, under the circumstances, it was not possible to hold the meeting, specially as a sufficient number of members were not present. Mr. Ali Imam appeared most anxious to hold a meeting under any circumstance, and explained the objects which necessitated such a step. In fact he again laid before the meeting the scheme which he had already explained to the members present on the 10th. There

were 19 members *then in the hall* where the discussion was going on. After an informal discussion it was decided to take votes on the question whether a meeting should be held in spite of the strong opposition on the part of the members from Allahabad, Aligarh and Eastern Bengal, and some of the Lucknow members.

Twelve including the six Bihar members were of opinion that the meeting should be held and this question should be considered in the meeting itself. Those who objected to such a course as being against the rules, emphatically declared their resolve not to join the meeting at all, but the final determination of the matter was deferred till 1·30 p. m. when the members were asked to meet at the big hall in the Baradari at Qaiser Bagh.

At the appointed time a short consultation was held between Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk. Haji Musa Khan, Honorary Secretary of the League of Aligarh, and the members from Allahabad and Eastern Bengal, and it was decided, that before any formal meeting could be held, the question regarding the meeting being unconstitutional and informal and unrepresentative should be reconsidered, and, further, that no meeting should be held without consulting the London Branch about Mr. Ali Imam's scheme. And if Mr. Ali Imam did not agree to this they should leave the meeting before any formal proceedings commenced.

It was considered a very serious step and wholly inadmissable to transgress the entire policy of the League at the instance of only a few members, without knowing the views of others and without consulting the London League on such a momentous question as was involved in the proposed scheme. At 2 p. m. it was found that no meeting was possible as only 24 members were present and the quorum was still incomplete. Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk then stood up and explained to the gentlemen present that, irrespective of the question whether under the rules the meeting could be held or not, it was most impolitic to insist upon holding the meeting in the face of such a strong opposition on the part of some of the members and without consulting the London Branch of the League.

The Secretary of the League, Haji Musa Khan, also could not help admitting that a mistake had been committed in calling the meeting at the suggestion of Mr. Ali Imam; and was very anxious to have the meeting adjourned. Both these gentlemen tried to use their pursuasive powers but Mr. Ali Imam, who was determined upon calling a meeting would not listen to anything. In support of the view taken by Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, Mr. Wazir Hassan, Vakil, High Court, surveyed the whole situation in brief speech and, addressing a few words specially to Mr. Ali Imam begged him not to force a meeting, but without the least effect.

Here Mr. Abdurrauf, Barrister of Allahabad, stood up and pointed out that, as under the rules, no meeting could be held, and as the action proposed to be taken involved practically the reversal of the policy of the League hitherto adopted both in this country and London, regarding the attitude of the

Mahommedans on the question of participation in mixed electorates, he would at once withdraw if the advice of our respected leader Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk was not listened to.

Mr. Ali Imam in reply to all the speeches, said that he was determined not to give up the idea of holding the meeting if a quorum could be had. In the meantime a gentleman from the city, a member of the League, was ushered in at about 3 p.m. to complete the quorum. Scarcely did Mr. Mahomed Ishaq of Allahabad, rise to say a few words in support of the suggestion of Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk and was in vain trying to claim a hearing when Mr. Mazharul Heq of Bihar stood up and proposed that Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk should take the chair and proceedings should formally commence. This action on the part of the Bihar member precipitated matters, and three of the members, namely, Hon. Khan Bahadur Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhry of Eastern Bengal, Shaikh Abdurrauf Rais of Mau Aima, Allahabad, and Syed Abdul Rauf, of Allahabad, forthwith left the hall. Upon this Mr. Ali Imam again moved that the meeting should proceed; but Mr. Abdul Majid of Allahabad again begged him not to press the matter further, as it would be better that the meeting should be adjourned. Mr. Ali Imam paid no heed to this request either, and Mr. Abdul Majid withdrew as well. Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk Haji Musa Khan, Mr. Mohamed Ishaq and some others, who were also of the same opinion, remained to see the proceedings wound up. Even this did not deter Mr. Ali Imam and his supporters from their purpose, and despite the fact that there were only 21 members left in the hall, and the quorum had been broken up, they insisted that the meeting was properly constituted, and proceedings should continue. Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk refused to take the chair. Raja Naushad Ali Khan was then proposed, but he, too, declined. Mr. Mahomed Nasim having been asked to take the chair, also in his turn refused to be the Chairman of a meeting without a quorum. When every attempt to force a meeting had failed the gathering dispersed. These are the facts, and it is now for the public to decide how far the action of those who wanted to force a meeting was justified. Under the rules of the All-India Moslem League it is in the power of the Committee to convene a meeting, 'provided that not less than one-third of the total number of members of the League shall call upon the Secretary of the Central Committee to hold such meetings, or that not less than two-thirds of the memers of the Central Committee shall consider the holding of such meetings necessary,' and among the duties of the Central Committee it is directed 'to send the members of the All-India Moslem League the Agenda of the annual and other meetings of the League and to fix the time and place of such meetings.'

None of these rules were observed. Among the members assembled Bombay and Madras were entirely unrepresented. Eastern Bengal was represented by only one member, the Punjab by no more than two members. Out of the members present, three were from Aligarh, six from Bihar, four from Allahabad, six from Lucknow, one from Fyzabad, one from N. W. Frontier

Province and one from Hardoi, and two from the Punjab. It will thus be seen that even if any meeting were held and any resolution passed it would have been of no avail for the proceedings would have been repudiated by the other members of the League.

Above all, it was most important that the London Branch and our two trusted Leaders, H. H. the Aga Khan and Mr. Ameer Ali, who have done so much for the Mahommedan cause, and in whom the Mahommedans repose implicit confidence should have been consulted before any new steps could be taken, and any departure from the old policy of the League decided upon.

Source: The Pioneer, 23 July 1909.

79

LETTER FROM MUSHIR HOSAIN KIDWAI TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING THE REFORM SCHEME

Allow me to criticise certain points concerning the Reform scheme raised at the meeting of the Muslim League at Lucknow on the 15th August. I may say at the outset that I personally never favoured a scheme of separate electorates as put forward by the League, and that in my opinion the system of electorate colleges was the one best fitted to safeguard the interests of different classes and communities. If the Mussulmans had put their claims in an unaggressive manner I am confident that those Hindu leaders who want a united India would not have grudged a few more seats to Mussulmans than what were due to them in proportion to their population and would have acquiesced to the ratio of electors in the electoral colleges being raised in favour of the Muslim community. Lord Morley himself very wisely accepted the principle of communal representation when he fixed a definite number for Mussulmans in the electoral college. If, for example, in these provinces the number of Mussulmans in the electoral college had been raised from 25 to 30 or 35 and those 30 or 35 members had been elected by Mussulmans themselves from their own community, and if by fixing a minimum of Mussulman members in the Council they had been given an effective control over the general election, the object of the League would have been achieved without causing any annoyance to sister communities. The electoral college system could be safely and easily extended to Municipal and District Board elections as well. However, now that the feeling between Hindus and Mussulmans has been embittered I do not think that Mussulman can safely move from the position they have occupied as is suggested by a section of the Muslim League,

It would be detrimental to the interests of the Muslim community if they now accede to a partial mixed electorate. Recent elections in these provinces have proved that Mussulmans have no chance left in such electorates, and if for that reason they do not care to listen to the counsel of peace and would adhere to the system of separate electorate they must give the franchise on a liberal scale and should not restrict it to those Mussulmans who belong to the Muslim League School of thought. If they do so it would be as absurd as if Hindus were to confine the franchise to the sympathisers with the National Congress. The Lucknow meeting thoughtlessly resolved that the qualification of electors and candidates should be identical. Of those qualifications the Muslims majority is such that their possessor would most likely be a sympathiser of the Muslim League and so representatives of that institution will be enabled to monopolise the seats. Trustees of the M.A.O. College, members of the central committee of the League and also those of the Executive Committee of the Provincial League all have been given franchise. Muslim fellows of the Allahabad University, though their number is very small, have been given a voice, and those of them who are graduates are entitled to a double vote. The interest of LL. B. Vakils have also been sefeguarded, but members of the English Bar, although much better qualified for a seat in the council on account of their knowledge of the Constitutional Law and Democratic institutions, have not been favoured with the privilege probably because of their independent character. Considering the poverty of Mussulmans the income and the land revenue qualifications required by the Lucknow meeting are also too high. In fact it is altogether a surprise why the separatist politicians want to put more restrictions to the candidature of a Mussulman for the council while Hindus do not want to fetter their choice by any restriction, and why do the former require their candidates and their voters to be richer than those of the latter. Obviously the amateur politicians of the Lucknow meeting who represented that party, which is considered by the advanced section of the Muslim community as a little obsequious and disruptive, and by the masses as heretical and self-seeking, had resolved to confine the privilege of election and candidature to that party only. I would suggest the following qualifications for the Muslim voters for any candidate offering himself for election to the Provincial Council (1) Paying a land revenue of not less than Rs. 1000; (2) Paying an income-tax on not less than Rs. 1200; (3) Being a graduate of any recognised University or a sanad holder of the Darul-ulum of the Nadwat-ul-ulama; (4) Being a member of any Inn of Court or a diplomat of any recognised medical or scientific institution. The standard for the franchise for the Imperial Council voters might be a little higher than the above but if Mussulmans want to move with the times and to regain that 'political importance' which belonged to them before they degenerated into a dull, sycophantic, and unorganised community under the un-Islamic influence of autocracy and selfish individualism they must be liberal in giving the franchise and should under no circumstance reserve it for any particular class or party.

The age of favouritism is gone. It is only the fittest who survive in the struggle for existence in this age.

Source : The Pioneer, 16 September 1909.

80

LETTERS FROM MINTO TO MORLEY

I

7 October 1909

The great thing is to get the ship launched, as to this I know you are as eager as I am. We have generally accepted the views of Local Government and are in complete accord with them.... I see from Reuter that Ameer Ali still shows signs of fight. It is impossible to please every one but I certainly think we have treated the Mahommedan very well and fairly.... In fact, the only opposition to any weight we have had to deal with has been engineered at home by Ameer Ali and the Aga Khan. Their supporters in India will no doubt grumble, but that cannot be helped, for we cannot jeopardize our scheme in deference to their exaggerated claims.

II

2 November 1909

Practically the whole difficulty of Mahommedan representation has been created at home. The meaning of pledges has been exaggerated and some were said I have been given that were never given at all. Personally I have a poor opinion of the Aga Khan. He is a good talker, clever and well able to pose as a champion of Mahommedan rights but I believe him to have little influence for India and that his Mahommedan fellow-countrymen have formed much the same estimate of him as I have.

Source : Minto Papers : Letters to the Secretary of State, 1909.

81

THE THIRD SESSION OF THE ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE HELD AT DELHI

29–30 January 1910

His Highness the Aga Khan then rose, amidst prolonged and thundering cheers, and delivered his inaugural address :

Seven years ago I had the honour of presiding at the Mahommedan Educational Conference held in this Imperial city at the time of the historic Proclamation Durbar of His Majesty the King Emperor. During the interval many things have happened, and one of the most gratifying signs of the times is the partial awakening of the Mussulmans of India. The recent march of events has been as rapid as it has been momentous; its course is indicated by the enactment in the Indian Empire of what Lord Morley called the 'signal transaction', with which benevolent and statesmanlike policy His Lordship's name will be permanently associated—and by the formation of our League. At first the idea of the formation of the League was actually pooh-poohed in some quarters, while in others it did not receive the attention it merited. But as subsequent events have shown, it has more than justified its existence, and I am proud to say that I was one of the originators of the movement. The necessity for the immediate formation of a Muslim League impressed me on the occasion of my visit to Aligarh in 1906, and I communicated the idea to my late and most lamented friend, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, by whose death we have suffered a serious and irreparable loss. With characteristic foresight, he accepted my suggestion, worked for its attainment, and brought about the Deputation which, waiting on H. E. Lord Minto in 1906, was the starting point of the recognition of the principle that the important Muslim minority in this country should have its fair and legitimate share in the administration of the country. We must not, however, forget that a sympathetic Viceroy whose memory is dear to Hindu and Muslim alike—the Hon'ble Lord Ripon—had in the early eighties laid down the principle of communal representation. For the maintenance of our due share in the political life in this country, and for the removal of an old standing exclusion, which formed a bone of contention between the Hindus and Mahommedans, the separate electorate for Mussulmans was deemed to be an absolute necessity. Now that we have secured it, I hope it will result in a permanent political sympathy and a genuine working *entente cordiale* between the members of the two great sister communities.

Let me make it clear that we have not received any undue preference, as has been alleged in some quarters. In fact, we have not got all that we thought was promised or all that we had asked for; but in their final shape the Reforms were publicly and gratefully acknowledged by us as a fair and

reasonable compromise. Here, I must recognize the loyal support which your representatives in England, Syed Ameer Ali and myself, received from practically the whole of the Muslim community; and I must say that without this practically absolute unanimity, we should never have had the fair share of representation in the new Councils to which we are entitled. When the elements of constitutional government were being introduced into India, it was only natural and right and just that we should press for the reasonable recognition of the special interests and peculiar needs of a vast and important community like the Muslims. I am glad our just demand has been recognized. Now that the Reform Scheme has been finally settled and is actually in active operation, we must accept it as final in an appreciative spirit, worthy of our traditions, and try to make the best of it as loyal subjects of our beloved Sovereign the King Emperor and as citizens of India. May I venture also to say most emphatically that it is to the interests of Indians—Hindus and Muslims, Christians and Parsis alike—to accept the Reforms in a spirit of cordial appreciation, and that it now lies with us to do our utmost as enlightened citizens to co-operate with Government and our representatives in the councils in working them for the common welfare of the people, remembering that if we make a practical and beneficent use of this opportunity, we shall surely, in time to come, get a further advance towards constitutional government. In fact I may say that self-government has come to our very doors. On the other hand, if we waste our time in squabbles over the form of the Regulations, and in general hostility towards what should be regarded as a settled fact, we shall lose the sympathy of our well wishers in India and England, and the result will be that the growth of liberal institutions, and our slow progress on the long path towards ultimate parliamentary institutions in India, will be greatly retarded. We must all remember that if these Reforms fail, the alternative will not be a more liberal set of regulations, but a return to the *status quo ante* that will check the realization of our aspirations. Public opinion in England scrutinizes India carefully and is watching to see how we discharge the great trust committed to us. Are we Indians prepared to go forward on the road to reform or to recede and disappoint our friends ? Do we desire further liberal concessions, or do we wish the curtailment of the rights now at last granted ? There can be no doubt as to the reply. Is it not then the duty of all, Hindus as well as Mahommedans, to prove by our conduct and ability that we are capable of making practical improvements in the moral and material conditions of the people, which is after all the aim of wise governments ? If we fail in the initial stage, what prospect is there of our obtaining the further liberalization of the rules and regulations at a later stage ? A grave duty rests upon us in connection with the new Councils; they are not an end in themselves but are only the means to achieve an end, namely, the improvement of the moral, material and economic condition of our people by the diffusion of education and science, so as to develop the intelligence and humanity of our peoples

in the highest sense. If we prove by our knowledge of the conditions of the country, by our zeal and efficiency, that our co-operation is an indispensable factor in the improvement of the administration of the country, then I have no doubt that gradually our area of utility and opportunity and powers will expand. But, if on the other hand, we view the Reform Scheme and the regulations under it in a spirit of obstructive particularism instead of using the wide powers placed in our hands for the conservation and development of those forces which are the dynamic factors in national progress all the world over, then as surely as night follows day, we shall divert the slant of fair wind which ought to drive us far on towards the realization of many of our cherished ambitions.

HINDU-MUSLIM CO-OPERATION

Now that we Mussulmans have striven for and obtained a reasonable recognition of our rights, should we not consider what our aims are, what interests we have in common with our Hindu brethren; and what are the peculiar communal interests which will demand the steady attention of our representatives ? Our first and foremost duty is to prove our active loyalty towards our Sovereign and his heirs and successors by our endeavours to strengthen the foundation of British rule in India and its permanence by consolidating the sentiments of loyalty which permeate the land, by taking a legitimate pride in the glorious Empire in which we are partners, by uniting the great sister communities through the bonds of sympathy, affection, and a community of interests. And may I plead again for no mere cold calculating loyalty, bound up with a materialistic sense of favours to come; but a warm passionate attachment to the Imperial House under which this country has made such gigantic strides, which has given us the most liberal raj the world has ever seen, and which alone guarantees us the peaceful attainment of those grand national destinies that we believe to be in our hand—an attachment to His Majesty's throne and person, and through that to the historic institutions of which he is the head, which shall burn in our hearts and colour all our actions. Our representatives in the Councils are first there as loyal Indian subjects of the Emperor, and then as the guardians of any special interests of the Muslims. Their function in the Council is of a three-fold character. In the first place, they must co-operate, as representative Indian citizens, with other Indians in advancing the well-being of the country by working whole-heartedly for the spread of education, for the establishment of free and universal primary education, for the promotion of commerce and industry, for the improvement of agriculture by the establishment of co-operative credit and distribution societies, and for the development of all the natural resources of the country. Here indeed is a wide field of work for Hindus and Mahommedans acting together, in forwarding practical measures that must tend to the permanent welfare of the country. In the second place, our representatives must be ready to co-operate with the Hindus and all other sections of society

in securing for them all those advantages that serve their peculiar conditions and help their social welfare, for although the two sister-communities have developed on different lines, each suffers from some peculiar weakness in addition to the misfortunes common to general economic and educational backwardness. And then our representatives must watch and promote social measures exclusively for the benefit of their Muslim co-religionists with the co-operation, we hope, of the Hindu members; for we, too, have needs that are not known to them and which we alone can fully understand. We have committed to us the sacred duty of helping forward, with our sympathy and advice and practical help, the interest not only of Indian Mussulmans, but also of our co-religionists outside India, whose true and permanent welfare depends, in no small measure, upon the greatness of England and upon the maintenance of the British Empire foremost in the councils of the world.

I have no hesitation in asserting that unless Hindus and Mahommedans co-operate with each other in the general development of the country as a whole and in all matters affecting their mutual interests, neither will develop to the full its legitimate aspirations or give full scope to its possibilities. In order to develop their common economic and other interests, both should remember that one is the elder sister of the other, and that India is their common parent; religious differences should be naturally reduced to the minor position, as such differences have been in America and Western Europe. We must bear in mind that the healthy national unity which we seek to establish will not be promoted but retarded by forgetting the historical and social differences that have made Hindus and Mahommedans what they are to-day. We must determine what are the interests that we have in common with the Hindus, and co-operate for their advancement; then remember the measures necessary for the removal of our peculiar ills and again help each other in removing them. What is the actual work of those who sit in the different Councils as our representatives, what is to become of the League, what is its legitimate sphere of work ? My respected friend the Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali has to some extent defined the proposed division of work of the League, and I fully and cordially agree with him. I need therefore say no more about it than this, that nothing would be more disastrous to our interests than the impression that its work is to be confined to the narrow limits of political activity or the attainment of merely selfish ends. It must embrace catholic interests in their broadest sense. We must ascertain the real, pressing needs of India, and then devote our attention and energies to satisfying them.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

We have then before us a comprehensive programme involving a vigorous, practical, sustained attack on the problems relating to education, agriculture, commerce and industry. I place free primary education for the masses in the front rank. Our aim must be to see that it is not only free and universal but also sufficiently practical to be of use to agriculturists and labourers. In

arranging our courses of elementary education, we must keep in mind the fact that an immense proportion of those attending the primary schools do not proceed beyond them, and that they should be so designed that the pupil will fully benefit from the primary schools without reaching the secondary. We must concentrate our energies on primary education in such a way that there shall be no redundance or superfluity, so as to make it of real benefit to the recipients. The agriculture classes should in particular be given such training as will secure them the fruits of their industry. Our system of secondary education stands in need of a two-fold development. We should extend and improve the facilities for imparting a sound grounding to those who are proceeding to the Arts Course, and then, on the other hand, we need urgently to develop a 'modern' side, which will be complete in itself, and will fully equip the student for a career in the rapidly increasing commercial activities of the country, or for the specialised scientific course, for which there is an ever growing field. So far we have made little or no progress towards securing that diffused knowledge of science, which is absolutely essential if the country is to take its rightful place amongst the producer nations of the world. Until our teaching machinery is enormously improved, students in these special courses must obtain their instruction abroad, and there is no method better than the multiplication of Government and other scholarships. But we shall not rest content until there are provided in this country facilities for the instruction of its students up to the highest pitch demanded by the stress of modern industrial life. Then when we have our trained men, we have to assist them to develop the economic resources of the country. We must send our boys not only to England and the Continent but to America and Japan, so that they may learn the various processes in the lives of that great industrial commonwealth. Those who have acquired proficiency in commercial training should be helped by co-operative societies to open business not only in Europe and America but in Africa and Asia to find markets for indigenous Indian products. To foster local industries, to relieve agricultural indebtedness, and to ameliorate the lot of the peasantry and encourage artisans, it is necessary to form extensive co-operative societies under the aegis of the Government.

AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

To obtain the regeneration of Indian arts and industries, either a temporary moderate system of protection, or some corresponding economic expedient should be adopted, so as to prevent the strangulation of these infant industries. We must have ever before our eyes the fact that the great mass of the Indian population is dependent upon agriculture. In Europe and North America, society has passed from the agricultural to the industrial stage of evolution, but here we are still in the primitive stage; our emergence from it will be slow and gradual, and Hindus and Mahommedans have ample scope for improving the lot of the toiling agriculturists impoverished by the ravages of famine consequent upon drought and their social customs and thriftless

habits. Here we have an immense agricultural class; our duty is to make that agriculture pay. By a rational system of elementary education we can keep the peasant from the coils of the usurer; by the extension of irrigation we can reduce his dependence upon an erratic rainfall. But the history of agriculture all the world over tells us that the salvation of the small cultivator lies in co-operation. Co-operation to secure cheap credit and wipe off the burden of hopeless debt that hangs round the necks of our ryots; co-operation to secure cheap and efficient distribution; co-operation in the introduction of agricultural implements and to profit by the lessons of our Research Institute and experimental farms—this is the only agency that can permanently benefit our backward agriculture. Then our industrial development must equally claim our united attention. No country in the world can be great or prosperous until its agricultural and industrial activities have been made mutually dependent on each other. It is commerce and trade that have made European countries prosperous and powerful; and if we aspire to our legitimate place in the British Empire, we must concentrate our mind on our economic development.

SUPPORT FOR INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Another direction in which the two communities must immediately work together is the burning question of the Indians in South Africa. Our fellow subjects, who are there maintaining an unequal struggle in a heroic manner that commands our admiration are wilfully subjected to persecution, insults and indignity and are branded with the undeserved stigma of an inferior race. We must do all in our power to help our compatriots in South Africa. Hindus and Mahommedans have combined there in the common defence of the prestige of the whole Indian population; and the passive resistance they offer, amid untold privations and sufferings, with patience and martyrdom, must set an example to those here who are not ashamed to have a recourse to measures that have brought infinite shame and disgrace to India. If no better method can be found of bringing the Colonial Government to see the glaring injustice and cruelty of their acts to our brethren, we must ask the Government to stop all indented labour to South Africa as a mild step of retaliation. Yet another channel, and even more important for immediate purposes than anything else, in which Hindus and Mahommedans can co-operate with all their powers of mind and will, is the wiping out of the blot on the fair name of India by the extirpation of the anarchical cult. We must send earnest missionaries, form organisations and vigilance committees, and from pulpits and platforms, from mosques and temples, orders must emanate for the prevention of political crime, inflicting social disabilities on sedition-mongers and their disciples. In particular, students must be guarded from the tainted influence of the foolish and insane people who would ruin the country. All these are questions in which loyal and patriotic Hindus and loyal and patriotic Mahommedans can work hand in hand for a common goal with singleness of purpose and awakened conscience.

MUSLIM UNIVERSITY

Now I will come to the questions of separate or exclusive Muslim interests, which, let me at once add, in no way clash with the interests of great sister community, but still affect us only. Pre-eminent amongst these practical questions is the foundation of a Muslim University at Aligarh. As I pointed out here seven years ago, our youth must be in a position to acquire in addition to modern science, a knowledge of the glorious past of our religion. Without a sincere and deep but unobtrusive and charitable faith without that childlike feeling of dependence on the Unseen Power of which the visible universe is but a sign, our youth can never develop their highest and noblest faculties, their spiritual and emotional qualities. Our university must be a residential university. Like those great seats of learning, Oxford and Cambridge, it will strive to form the character, as well as train the intellect, and satisfy the emotions through the medium of a loving and charitable faith, of discipline, of field sport, and that intangible atmosphere that environs all which is best in university life. It should be the home of great ideas and great ideals. But it should also be much more : our efforts ought to be bent to the task of making Aligarh a Muslim Oxford—an educational centre and intellectual capital to which all Muslims should turn for light and guidance. We should lay bare before the rising generations the treasures concealed in ancient Arabic lore with a view to developing the spiritual and emotional side of their nature, which in its true sense is now even more backward than our economic condition. In order to enable us to come in touch with what is best in the ancient Hindu civilization and better to enable us to understand the origin and structure of Hindu thought and religion in its widest sense, as well as to inculcate in us a feeling of respect and affection for our fellow-subjects, and to teach us to consider their customs and their prejudices, Sanskrit and other Oriental literature ought also to be given due prominence in the curricula. The object of the university is not to gratify mere sentiment or vanity; we believe it to be necessary for the true development of our principles and the ultimate spiritual unity of our faith. Commonsense and science alike teach us that we are not independent agents but links between the past and the future; and all that is healthy and glorious in the past should be preserved, taught and understood, because it exercises a beneficial influence on the future. It is therefore necessary that all that is good should be conserved, to enable us to hold a spiritual communion with the beloved figures of the Prophet and his companions and with our splendid historic past. To avoid the catastrophe involved in the radical separation of ancient and modern ideals, the university is our great need. Moreover, it is our aim to develop discipline and reverence in our youth, and instil in their minds the principles of toleration, piety and charity, so that they can live in concord and harmony with other races. Our loyalty to the Throne must be absolute, and our relations with the Hindus and all other Indian

communities who share that loyalty must frankly be most cordial. Otherwise our political activities will tend to the undoing of both, and ultimately prove detrimental even to the British power. The true interests of the British Empire can never lie in a policy of 'divide and rule'. Such a policy, as British and Indian statesmen worthy of the name well know, can only weaken their ultimate power and make India a source of anxiety instead of a source of strength.

THE POLITICAL FAITH OF ORDERED DEVELOPMENT

Whilst we hold fast to our own religious, social, and ethical ideals, whilst we hold equally fast to the separate organisation and separate representation which are essential for their maintenance and to secure for our community its due influence in the body politic, it must be the desire of our rulers, no less than of ourselves, to pursue these ideals, to work out our constructive programme, in harmonious co-operation with all other Indians who accept the cardinal principles of our political faith—the ordered development of this country under the Imperial Crown. Time, the opportunities for co-operation in stimulating the social and economic progress of this country, and the diffusion of education will also, I believe remove the acerbities attaching to the religious difficulties and caste disabilities which sap the foundation of Indian society, so that they will become, in the distant future, the minor forces that they are now in Western Europe and America. If we extend hearty and sincere co-operation in each other's transactions and interests and pursue higher ideals and act with moderation and judicious calm, then I have no apprehension for the future of India.

WAKF-ALAL-AULAD

Now I will say a few words in special support of the suggestions made by my distinguished friend Syed Ameer Ali, the President of the London Branch of this League—whose absence from our deliberations I deplore more than I can say—as to the system of *Wakf-alal-Aulad.* This is again our exclusive interests, but I hope the Hindus will co-operate with us in seeing that Muslim families are now broken to pieces. We must strive to bring about a satisfactory solution of the important question, as it is necessary that Muslim families should be protected against the impoverishing influence of constant and vexatious sub-divisions. I feel very strongly on the subject, with Syed Ameer Ali, and I think this is a question where our Muslim representatives can directly set to work, and thus benefit the community. I fully endorse the various practical suggestions made by Syed Ameer Ali, but I do not wish to tire you out by treading the same ground, as most of you are already familiar with my full agreement with his views on the practical proposals placed before us in his usual forceful manner by the London President.

THE FUTURE

And now, gentlemen, let me say a final word with regard to the future. We have before us a convincing demonstration of the altruism and liberality of British statesmanship. In the midst of difficulties so great that at times they threatened to overcast the political horizon, undaunted by acts of anarchy in India and those conservative influences that must beset the path of the reformer in every country and in every age, Lord Minto and Lord Morley have turned a bright new page in Indian history. We do not know which to admire most—the courage and sympathy of the Viceroy, or the judgment, intellectual strength and sober liberalism of Lord Morley. But we are confronted by the fruits of their work. We see the representatives of all classes of people in this country brought to the Councils of the Imperial and Provincial governments in numbers never before approached. We see these Councils endowed with an authority, with opportunities for making the opinions of its members known and operative, to a degree far transcending any that existed in the past, associating us indeed with the daily administration of the country. The future lies more largely than ever with ourselves. By the measure in which we rise to these responsibilities shall we be judged, will the fortunes of the land to which we are passionately attached rise or fall. Fully conscious of these opportunities, let me once again earnestly appeal to all to support law and order, remembering the immense blessings British rule has conferred upon this land. Never was the condition of Indians more happy than it is to-day. Never was peace of the country so serene and secure as under the Crown. Fifty years of British rule in India, since it passed to the direct control of the Crown from the East India Company, has changed the entire character and political aspect of the country. We have been secured against strife and disorder. The elevation of the people in the scale of civilization by means of Western training, the development of the country by encouraging foreign capital, the gradual disappearance of social and traditional barriers through the levelling influence of education, the security of life, property and peace, and the dispensation of justice with an even hand to rich and poor alike, the guarantee of freedom of thought and speech, and liberty of press, and above all religious toleration, have all right about a silent but steady change in the thoughts, aspirations and manners and behaviour of the people. We are at the beginning of a period of renaissance and reform in the social, economic and political life of the people, and by ethical teachings we may inspire our youth and their desendants, with a genuine love of their country and fellow-men. The moral and material and intellectual condition of the population presents a curious and on the whole a favcurable contrast with the pre-British period; and in the words of the philosopher-statesmen that rules India the bureaucracy in India has proved to be 'a great and splendid machine for performing the most difficult task that ever was committed to the charge of any nation.' Indian public spirit is cultivated on Western lines, the intellectual

expansion is quickened in a marvellous degree. New hopes and new ambitions have been created as a natural sequence of this instruction, and to meet them British statesmen have wisely resolved to give Indians a far larger share in the administration of the country. No human agency can be perfect in this word and that applies to British rule as to all other, but even if the British Government had no other claim on our affections, these great political concessions alone would entitle them to our deep and sincere gratitude. But they have, as you and I know full well, changed the destiny of the country, set afoot progressive agencies, the end of which is not yet in sight, and brought the country into line with the civilized countries of Europe, proving in the words of the great English poet:

Peace has her victories,
No less renowned than war.

All this is due to the beneficial influence of *Pax-Britannica.* Now may I ask whether we have paid our debt to the Empire, to our country and to our community? The community that carried culture to the Pyrenees and to Central Asia, the community that can still recall with emotional pride the greatness of Cordova and Damascus cannot be dead to its sense of duty. I appeal to you with all the force in my power, I entreat you with all the earnestness at my command, to imitate the spirit of those who made Toledo and Baghdad, to dream day and night, to work day in and day out, for the noble object of elevating Muslim life so as to hold forth the highest ideals before the younger generation. The task before us is of stupendous magnitude, the path of progress is endless; but if we have at heart the true interests of Islam, no obstacle and no sacrifice will be too great to speed our onward march on the path of progress.

I fervently pray that for ever we shall have the Imperial dynasty and the Union Jack as the abiding centre of our real national unity, that our immediate aim shall be to make young generations virtuous and efficient and our posterity robust and healthy, so that it may fulfil its legitimate part in the Empire with honour to the race. Let our polestar be active and unimpeachable loyalty to the Sovereign and the glory of India and of Islam.

His Highness the Aga Khan then introduced to the audience the President of the Session, Sir Ghulam Mohammad Ali Khan Bahadur, K.C.I.E., the Prince of Arcot, whose splendid ancestry, he said, was well known throughout Asia. The President then took the Chair amidst vociferous cheers and delivered his Presidential address, which was received with remarkable enthusiasm:

Your Highness and Gentlemen, I thank you for the great honour that you have conferred on me by selecting me to be your President at this Session of the All-India Muslim League. Believe me that though I yield to none in my earnest desire to help forward the cause of the community to which you and I belong, it was with great hesitation that I accepted the high responsibility to which I have been called. My diffidence is due to the

consciousness that I am but an apprentice in the field of national service compared to the past masters before whom I am privileged to stand. This feeling is still heightened, when I remember that this place was to have been occupied by so trusted and eminent a leader of our community as the Right Honourable Syed Ameer Ali. Though we are denied the privilege of meeting him face to face by the gracious call which has been made upon his services by our august Sovereign—an event, let me say in passing, at which we all rejoice as making an important extension in the privileges of the Indian subjects of His Majesty— it is a source of satisfaction to us that we are not left altogether without his valuable guidance. He has sent a message to the League which you will presently have the pleasure to listen to, and I have no doubt that you will appreciate the words of wisdom and counsel which that patriot has felt it necessary to send, in his solicitude for the welfare of the community to whose interests he has devoted his life-long energies and resources. Inspired by the spirit of this message and stimulated by the magnetic personality of our respected President, H. H. the Aga Khan, you will, I trust, extend to me that friendly co-operation and kindly indulgence which is so essential to the proper discharge of the duties of my office.

Many events of importance have occurred since we met last at Amritsar—events both of a pleasurable as well as painful nature. But by far the greatest of these is the introduction in this country of the great Scheme of Reforms initiated by Lords Minto and Morley, and the awakening in community which it has been instrumental in causing. The varying vicissitudes through which this Scheme passed at various times, though often of a nature to damp our ardour and spirits, fortunately served as a powerful incentive to further efforts, and resulted in an unprecedented outburst of political activity which has wiped out the stigma of utter inertness so long attaching to our name. Hundreds of meetings were held all over the country under the auspices of the numerous leagues and associations, and respectful representations were made to Government, praying for the protection of Mussulman interests in the spirit of the famous pledge of H. E. Lord Minto to the All-India Muslim Deputation in October 1906. A generous minister and a fair-minded administration have recognized the justice of our demands, and we are met here to-day, full of heartfelt gratitude, to consider how best we might show ourselves worthy of the high trust that has been reposed in us. It is true that the Indian Mussulmans have not got all they prayed for and that was legitimately their due. In the scheme of representation adopted for the Imperial Council, our brethren in the North-Western Frontier Province, Baluchistan and the Central Provinces have not been conceded the privilege of sending up their representatives, nor have our brethren in the Punjab been invested with the right of electing their representatives on the Imperial Council, nor has separate representation been conceded to them on the Provincial Council. Our Burman co-religionists remain utterly unrepresented on the expanded Councils. Nevertheless, we accept the Reforms

in the spirit of loyalty and gratitude which has ever characterized our communal policy towards the benign Government. The enlightened leadership of H. H. the Aga Khan, and the Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali, has not only secured for us our rights at the hands of the Government, but has brought about a wonderful solidarif and uniformity of ideas in the community. And it is our fervent hope that with their continued advice and help, we shall in time be able to prove ourselves worthy of the great responsibilities that have been thrown upon us by the Reforms just introduced, and to falsify the misgivings that some of our countrymen have entertained without any justification as regards our attitude towards our sister communities.

Permit me, gentlemen, at this juncture to observe that to me it seems unreasonable to condemn the Reforms wholesale, as is being done in certain quarters. To all right-minded persons these Reforms are really the outcome of the generous instinct of far-sighted British statesmen, whose only desire is to satisfy, in as liberal a manner as is consistent with the safety of the Empire and its many-sided interests, the growing aspirations of the Indian peoples, even at a time when the inhuman and anarchical acts perpetrated by a mischievous and detested section of our countrymen might well have justified a different policy. I cannot understand with what logic, or reason, the separate electorates introduced with a commendable desire to protect the special interests of important minorities, are characterized as designed to serve like iron walls for dividing one community from another. To me it appears that separate representation is the only provision calculated to prevent undesireable conflict between two unequally balanced communities, as is inevitable in a contest where candidates of different Legislative Councils in the country furnish an excellent object-lesson in this respect. Though Mussulmans have been returned by certain mixed electorates, it is, in spite of whatever our Hindu brethren might choose to say to the contrary, clear from an impartial survey of facts that their success was due only to sheer chance, the Hindus generally voting only for the candidates of their own persuasion. And it is noteworthy that the return of these Mussulmans, though entirely due to exceptional circumstances which from their very nature cannot be expected to recur, has been made use of by a class of Hindu publicists as a ground for condemning the right of separate representation granted to our community. This attitude of our friends is certainly not calculated to promote that harmony and co-operation between the two communities which they profess to bring about. The attitude of the Parsees and the native Christians in asking for separate electorates show an appreciation of the benefits likely to result from communal representation. And it is my firm conviction that if ever Indian solidarity is to be attained, it will be not so much by the narrow-minded policy, which certain of our countrymen are following, of insisting on a uniformity of views in all respects, and of belittling the importance of opinions and sentiments which are different

from their own, but by a liberal minded recognition of the differences that exist amongst ourselves, and a general desire to give each one his due, so as to secure mutual goodwill and consideration for the sake of our common motherland. This has the more to be kept in mind, especially as the Reforms which have now been conceded, form but an earnest of the greater measures which are yet to follow. The institutions of local self-government are shortly to be remodelled and as the Mussulmans have always held that if the Reforms are to be really effective, the principle of separate representation should be carried deep down to the lower most rungs of the ladder; and it will be our duty to press for the formation of separate electorates in all municipal, taluka and district boards.

Much has been said and still more may be said of the importance of the Reforms; but in my view, their greatest value consists in the political education which they are calculated to impart to the people at large. Already, the awakening which our leaders had brought about in the community with so much difficulty has been remarkably enhanced. Even people usually given to supreme apathy and indifference have been aroused to a sense of the necessity of bestirring themselves. Not the least evidence of this transformation in the community is found in the Southern Presidency where a Provincial League has been successfully formed and separate representation introduced under satisfactory conditions. It has been my privilege to be connected with this movement and watch its progress from its very commencement; and it is my firm conviction that the policy which we have hitherto pursued, the policy of loyalty to Government, of the protection of our interests and friendliness to our neighbours, is a sound and safe one and—not withstanding all the difficulties which His Highness the Aga Khan alluded to in one of his recent utterances - will lead to our ultimate success.

I do not think it necessary for me to discuss in any detail either our policy or the subjects that will engage your attention during the next three days. This has been dealt with by our President in his eloquent opening address, and the gentlemen who will address you after me will, no doubt, have a great deal to say in this connection. Let me, however, refer in brief to some of the chief means by which I think we may achieve the national regeneration which we all have in view.

NEED TO DEVELOP MUSLIM PRESS

Foremost amongst these, is the question of the Muslim Press, which I observe with pain and regret, is not sufficiently strong. In these days when the press may be truly said to rule the world, it is impossible to the fullest and the best advantage of the awakening in our community, without having powerful organs of public opinion. I appeal to the well-to-do leaders of the community to look upon the establishment of newspapers, especially of a strong English daily in every province, as a philanthropic concern and raise, by subscriptions amongst themselves, a sufficiently large fund to start and

maintain them in a prosperous and efficient condition.

A MUSLIM UNIVERSITY

Another powerful means of influencing the community to push on the propaganda we have set before ourselves has to do with the education of our younger generation. The question of raising the Aligarh College to the status of a university is as intimately connected with the fortunes of the political movement in the community as with its educational or social advancement. It is recognized on all hands that the safe and sound policy along which the Indian Mussulmans are moving at the present time is due, in no small measure, to the healthy tone which the M. A. O. College imparts to its Alumni and, through them, to the community at large, and I feel sure that when, as a university, it becomes a central seat of learning and the chief fountainhead of thought for the Mussulman world, this process of expansion will be quickened, and its healthy tone will communicate itself to the future leaders of the community and exercise a salutary influence on all the flowers of Islam. In this view it is necessary that the question of a Muslim University should be taken up and handled on this platform as on the platform of the All-India Mahommedan Educational Conference.

URDU AS A COMMON VERNACULAR

A third way of bringing about the desired regeneration of the community is the extension of Urdu as the common vernacular of all the Mussulmans in the country. Community of language is universally admitted to be a powerful factor in securing the unity of a people, and Urdu, which is already spoken by considerable numbers and which is generally understood in all parts of this vast continent, is pre-eminently fitted to serve this purpose.

Moreover, Urdu has preserved all the good features of an Oriental language and has not been contaminated by the disturbing influences which, though foreign to our soil, have unfortunately begun to make inroads into the other vernaculars. The loyal and respectful tone towards the Government which the Urdu Press has maintained in the hands of the Mussulmans, even during the most stirring period in recent times, illustrates clearly what I mean.

Assuredly, a language which possesses such inherent capacity and virtues deserves the solid support of the community. It is encouraging to remember that, day by day, the sphere of the influence of Urdu is extending. Even in such a distant part of the Empire as Madras, people whose mother tongue is Tamil, Telegu, Malyalam or Canarese, are increasingly adopting Urdu for all practical purposes and are founding schools in which Urdu forms the medium of instruction. I trust that all lovers of the country and all lovers of peace and progress will try their best to strengthen this tendency and strenuously strive to make Urdu the common language of all India.

Gentlemen, these are trite commonplaces, no doubt, but I have so long

occupied you with them for the simple reason that, more often than not, we are in danger of forgetting even such common places merely on account of their familiarity.

The renewed agitation of the Bangalis for the repeal of the Partition of Bengal has created some uneasiness in the minds of our co-religionists, especially in Eastern Bengal; but I am convinced that there is not the least ground for any such misgivings, in as much as the highest authorities have declared it to be a settled fact, and any tampering with that decision will be as dangerous to the prestige of the British rule in this country as it will, undoubtedly, be injurious to the vital interests of our community.

Before I sit down, let me remind you of a duty which we owe to ourselves and to our benign Government. It is admitted on all hands that peace and tranquility are sacred blessings, which have been secured to us by the British Raj, and without them no progress of any kind is possible. To the misfortune of our country, a nefarious brood of pseudo-patriots has sprung up in the land, with the unholy object of defying British authority and causing a state of confusion and anarchy. Only recently, the diabolical murder of a popular Collector at Nasik in the South, the attempt on the life of the Deputy Commissioner of Ambala in the North, and the dastardly shooting of a Mahommedan Inspector of the Criminal Investigation Department in the East, have sent a thrill of horror throughout the country. These revolting outrages have brought home with greater force the imperative necessity, on the part of all law-abiding citizens of this Empire, of devising concerted action to uproot the poisonous growth which has appeared amongst us. I appeal to you all, as the real lovers of the awakening and the advancement I have spoken of, to range yourselves on the side of the administration that has facilitated the regeneration of our community and to help to destroy the monster which threatens the peace of our country.

In conclusion, my earnest prayer is that it may be given to us to walk in the footsteps of our great forefathers, to remain true to our time-honoured traditions of active loyalty to the Government that affords us protection, and of goodwill towards the neighbours with whom our lot is cast, and render faithful service to Islam to which we are all so proud to belong.

At the request of His Highness the Aga Khan, the Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali's speech was then read by Mian Mohammad Shafi :

Your Highness, Rajas, Nawabs and Gentlemen, in 1908 you did me the honour of inviting me to preside at the Session of the League at Amritsar, but as ill-luck would have it I was unable to do so. With unusual indulgence you repeated your invitation and on the persuation of our President, my esteemed and valued friend, His Highness the Aga Khan, I accepted the position; and in fact at his instance, and to suit His Highness and my convenience, you fixed the Session of the League late in January, for which I am most recognizant to you. But circumstances have again arisen to prevent my personal attendance. Next year, perhaps, if you are still disposed

to hear my words, I may be more fortunate. Meanwhile, acting on our President H. H. the Aga Khan's suggestion, I send you herewith my written greetings.

Since your last Session important constitutional change have been inaugurated in the country, the full results of which can hardly be realized yet. Others are on the *tapis*, which, when formulated, will no doubt be carefully considered by you in all their bearings.

Throughout the controversy to which the Reform proposals gave rise, the Mussulman attitude, I am glad to say, was singularly sober and moderate, not actuated by any ill-will or antagonism towards any other community. The Mussulmans were animated with the single desire of safeguarding their rights and interests in such form as would give them an assured position in the political institutions of the country. Neither their claims nor their actions in urging them implied any encroachment on, or, disregard of the rights of any other body. The Mussulman people owe a debt of gratitude to the League and its branches and to the cognate organisations for having, in the first place, grasped the situation that had suddenly risen in India, and in the second place, for having consistently followed the policy necessary in dealing with it. To understand the difficulty with which they were confronted, you have only to realize the disintegrated condition of Mussulman society due to causes partly of our own creation, the utter inability, in most cases, to understand the real method of work or the nature of the remedies needed under the circumstances. To these must be added the lack of political training, so essential in progressive communities to take full advantage of the extension of constitutional privileges. Until very recently, the preaching of those amongst you who had to some extent studied the signs and portents of the times and knew with some certainty what was coming, had been literally a cry in the wilderness. Whilst other communities had combined with purely literary education considerable political training, our people had sedulously refused to occupy themselves with the question of communal organisation or the consideration of communal interests prosecuted with wisdom and advocated in unselfishness. We had remained content with purely academic training. Individualism, the curse of Mussulman community was encouraged; little or no attempt was made to show the unity of interests between the various classes comprising Mussulman society. No considered effort was directed to stay its further disintegration, nay, decomposition; and when we awoke but the other day and realized what was impending, we naturally found the field occupied by more alert rivals. If I am laying bare the mistakes of the past, it is only with the object of drawing your attention, as earnest Muslims and true patriots, sincerely bent on the improvement of our people, as I believe you are, to the work which lies before us in the future.

In the great controversy which has just closed regarding the share of the Mahommedans in the new constitutional privileges the Crown has extended to the peoples of India, I have not been able to understand the rigidity displayed

by so many high-placed officials towards the Mussulman claims.

The subject, however, may be regarded for the present as *res judicata*, and I sincerely trust that the two great communities whom the Reforms mainly affect will decide to work together in harmony and concord for the good of their common country. They have both to live together, to progress together, and in evil days to suffer together. The Mussulmans have established their right to be in the land by a longer domicile than the Normans have England; many of them have the same blood in their veins as their Hindu fellow-countrymen. There is no reason whatever why, in spite of difference of religion, customs, habits, of life and ideals, they should not co-operate in the great task which lies before them both, or promoting the welfare of India under the aegis of the British Crown. National development, even the fulfilment of the dream of self-government, depends on the co-operation of both races in a spirit of amity and concord. I have used the word dream in connection with self-government, not from any thought of disparagement, but because I feel that for many years to come British rule in India is a vital necessity. I firmly believe that if Great Britain were to lose her hold over this country before the diverse races, creeds and nationalities have thoroughly learnt the value of a spirit of compromise and toleration in the management of public affairs before they have clearly understood the responsibilities of citizenship, it will mean a relapse into the anarchy of 150 years ago, a fierce religious and racial struggle, and a collapse of the fabric so laboriously built up within the last half century. The idea that any one particular race can hold down the others without outside help must be dismissed as an idle dream. Mussulman supremacy was laid to dust when Aurangzeb went to his grave; Hindu supremacy received its death-blow when the Mussulman confederation shattered the Mahratta host on the banks of the Jamna; Panipat paved the way for the rise of British power in India. It was indeed a wise decree of Providence that enabled the British to take over the helm from the last *de jure* sovereign of India. And it would be rank ingratitude if Hindus and Mahommedans alike were not to recognize the greatness of the work achieved by England with the legacy left to her by India's previous rulers.

To the Mussulmans of India the permanence of British rule is a matter of the utmost importance; their sympathies and their interests extend far beyond the limits of the Indian continent, and the peaceful maintenance and development of all they value depends on England retaining her predominant place in the councils of the civilized world. It is therefore essential for us to associate ourselves whole-heartedly with the maintenance of law and order to co-operate in all loyalty of spirit with the servants of the Crown to promote the country's welfare, and to put aside any wild and visionary dreams about India's sudden emergency to independence. At the present stage of the country's development, it behoves us all to impress on our rising generation the duties of loyal citizenship and the necessity of realizing India's needs in

a sober spirit.

At the same time, I do not wish to recommend that you should cease to urge your claims to your share in the benefits of British rule, or to raise your voice against the unfair treatment of your fellow-countrymen in any part of the Empire, or forego your right to question arbitrary acts of executive authority. You would fail in your duty both to yourselves and to your Sovereign if you did not object with all the strength in your command, but constitutionally, to any measure which you were convinced was to the detriment of your people or your country.

Gentlemen, so long as you work in this spirit, no man will have the right to complain of the loyalty and sincerity of your motives or the justice of your action. Rancour and spite you cannot control; but honest public opinion in England and India will never question the correctness of your attitude or the validity of your conduct.

With the very large extension of representative institutions, a new era has opened in India. How the privileges the Crown has granted to peoples of the country will be used, whether to its good or to its detriment, whether they will lead to concord and harmony or to discord and strife remains to be seen. One thing is certain, that unless the Hindus and Mahommedans accept the new machinery of administration in the spirit in which it has been granted and use it as a means for the economic as well as the political development of India, 'The Reform' will not prove a blessing.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

For our own people, the question of economic development overshadows all others. It has an importance for every class; the rich magnate, the wealthy landholder cannot dissociate himself from his humble brother of the lower ranks of the middle class without serious injury to the whole body, himself included.

HUMAN BEINGS ARE THE LIMBS OF ONE BODY

The interests of each class are bound up with those of the other, and therefore the material well-being and economic progress of the whole community is a matter of moment and concern to every Mussulman.

Within the last 40 years, education, and especially English education, has made enormous strides among the Mussulman people. Yet the material and economic condition of the general body of Mahommedans has not improved in proportion. In parts of the country there are distinct signs of retrogression. We have first to understand the causes of this deplorable feature in our national life, before attempting to seek remedies. The fact is that for many years past a steady process of disintegration and demoralization, partly induced by circumstances and forces beyond our control, has been going on in our midst; our men of wealth have not chosen to descent from their pedestals,

until quite recently, to take part in the national life; since we awoke to the value of modern Western culture, our education has remained one-sided; we did not realize until yesterday and I doubt it is thoroughly realized even now— the importance of political training.

Although thrift is part of the religion of Islam, we in India allow it little scope in practice. And what is the consequence : steady impoverishment of the community. State service and the profession of law monopolize the energies of a large number on the intelligent sections of the community. Many profitable fields of industry, commerce and trade lie uncultivated; while technical education and the study of practical science do not attract the attention they deserve. Nor has any method of co-operation been thought of with the object of checking the impoverishment of Mussulman families.

These are questions which no Mussulman who loves his people or his religion can think of without the deepest concern. Each defect singly would tend to undermine the prosperity of the best organized community; combined they are fatal where cohesiveness is wanting among the different sections.

As a consequence of the administrative conditions recently introduced in India, I fear political pursuits will, in the future, largely engross the activities of the Indian peoples. Much to the energy that might be devoted with advantage to the development of the country, in directions which lead to her intellectual and material progress, will be diverted to the generally barren fields of politics.

'SYSTEM OF MODERATION' IN POLITICS

I should like to warn my co-religionists against neglecting, in favour of political pursuits, those departments of industry or study which conduce to national prosperity. Far be it from me to say one word to discourage or dissuade you from keeping consistently before you your political rights and privileges, from insisting on their recognition, and educating your people to understand their meaning and to realize that rights imply duties. What I do desire to impress on you is that it would be fatal for you ever to allow all your energies to be absorbed in politics, as you allowed them to be absorbed in purely academic education. I consider it a mischievous sign of political activity that when four seats are allotted to Mussulmans on a provincial council, 14 notables of more or less equal worth should emerge from their solitudes to engage in a hot contest for election. As they cannot possibly occupy separate political platforms, as their policy on public questions must be identical, the contest take a turn of personal rivalry, the effect of which cannot be very healthy on the community. I appeal to the good sense of my people to abandon that characteristic which so stubbornly stood in the path of their progress. I would suggest to the Central League and all the Mussulmans organizations throughout the country to join in establishment what may be called a 'system of moderation' for the election of Mussulman members on councils, district boards, municipalities and local

boards. An influential advisory committee in all important centres might be of considerable assistance in bringing about compromise in the public interests, between rival candidates. Such a course would add strength to the Mussulman cause, would be patriotic, and in accord with the dictates of religion. Difficulties may suggest themselves to prevent our deriving full benefit from such committees. But I am confident their establishment would, to a great extent, ease the present tension in the Mussulman community. The 'system of moderation', I venture to suggest, will not interfere with the legitimate ambitions of any politician; but endeavouring to remove frictions and personal rivalries, assure to each candidate a successful issue and to the community some degree of credit for the present condition in some parts of the country is little short of scandalous.

SOLIDARITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Some effort should also be directed towards infusing a greater spirit of solidarity into Mahommedan society and removing the evil effects of the process of disintegration that has been going on amongst us for the last hundred years, and which has aggravated the feeling of egoistic individualism. I regard this failing as a diplorable evil among our people, which weakens our communal strength and deprives us of the advantages resulting from sustained loyalty to and co-operation with each other. A little while ago *The Times* in an article dealing with the centrifugal tendencies of the Spanish character remarked that if seven Spaniards were to form a political association, it would soon split into three with one independent. Unfortunately that criticism applies with equal oppositness to the Mahommedans in many parts of India. I would strongly urge on Mussulmans of light and leading, in general, and the Mussulman organizations, in particular, some system of regular social reunions at each centre, where Muslims would meet on friendly terms and discuss subjects of communal interests in a broad spirit, with an honest desire to sink personal differences and to subordinate personal ambitions to the well-being of the community. We must recognize that it serves no useful purpose to fritter away our strength in petty dispute or in forming party combinations against each other.

There should be clubs, such as exist in England, and have come recently into being in Turkey, in connection with the provincial and district Leagues for lectures on subjects of political, economic or scientific interest, for discussions and reading of works on history, political economy and other cognate-subjects, so as to engender a genuine and enlightened public spirit among our people.

We ought to be content no longer with merely passing resolutions. If the central and the provincial Leagues were to adopt the suggestion I am making and introduce it into their working programme, I would further suggest that leading and influential members should visit local centres and assist in the organization of these clubs. Periodical inspections would be

necessary on their part to encourage and sustain the interest of local members which has always a tendency to flag, to smooth frictions which have a peculiar habit of springing up—and generally to induce a spirit of *camaraderie* and good-fellowship. The same system, I would humbly urge, should be adopted in the provincial centres with the necessary adaptation. One great idea should dominate all the steps we take to create a real, abiding, intelligent interest among our people, high and low, in the national welfare. For, in this connection, we must not overlook our common failing, that when we have no great immediate purpose in view, our energies slacken, and, to use a colloquialism, we let our work slide. This should not be allowed under any circumstance. It should be our constant endeavour to keep our co-religionists alive to the crying needs of progress and national development under the aegis of the great Power which holds in its hands the destinies of India.

As I have already briefly indicated, there are many questions affecting the well-being of our people which will require your attention. I think you will agree with me that their economic and material condition is of the utmost importance, and you will have to consider, among other problems, how best to prevent the impoverishment of Mussulmans and the passing of Mussulman estates into other hands, how to foster industries among them to encourage trade and commerce, a better and more practical use of academic learning. I am merely indicating the directions to which, in our newly awakened desire to improve the general condition of our people we will have to devote our energies.

SETTLEMENT OF FAMILY DISPUTES AND THRIFT

The impoverishment of Mussulman families is a subject of stupendous magnitude. All progress, communal and individual, depends on stability of fortune. Superficially regarded, the Islamic system may seem socialistic; but while the great Founder of our Faith, in his endeavour to remedy the great injustice that prevailed in all the countries of the world when he made his appearance, ordained a division of property among the heirs of a deceased owner, he, at the same time, with his wonderful and divinely inspired genius, laid down a rule which provides a remedy against the consequences of infinite subdivisions among a succession of heirs. This is the institution designated in the Islamic system as *Wakf-alal-Aulad*. An endeavour should he made to place it on a satisfactory basis. The easiest solution would be to obtain from the Legislature a validating act that would give statutory recognition, with adequate safeguards against fraud, to a principle of supreme importance to the Mussulman people.

But this alone, in my judgement, will not be sufficient to check the impoverishment and untimate effacement of Mussulman families. Mussulmans must in the first place be taught thrift. Let us bear in mind what our Holy Book says :

But let not thy hand be tied up to thy neck, nor yet open it with all

openness lest thou sit down in rebuke in beggary.

Secondly, they must learn the value of co-operation and self-help, and thirdly, they must seek from the Legislature the re-establishment of courts of arbitration for the settlement of family disputes. Family litigation is the curse of Indian society. The moment a well-to-do Indian dies, be he Hindu or be he Mahommedan, his inheritance finds it way into the melting pot; dishonest employees encourage domestic disputes with a view to reaping a rich harvest for themselves. The money-lender, sitting at the gate of every fairly prosperous family, is ready to finance the disputants, conscious of the fact that whether they lose or win, his is the ultimate gain. It is notorious that the cost of litigation has increased enormously within recent years. In England there are two grades in the profession, in India there are at least three; and they all received their quota of the death duties, which the *mahajans* help in extracting from the estate of the deceased. No country, however prosperous, certainly no community circumstanced as the Mahommedan, can make headway against this insidious and persistent system of destruction. Within my own experience, four families have risen and disappeared successively in one district. A Mussulman family was displaced by an enterprising syndicate consisting of two *marwari* bankers, who in their turn were destroyed by another *marwari mahajan*, and this man, I now understand, is making room for another member of his class.

The disastrous consequences to the prosperity and progress of the country from this eternal whirl of life and death, can hardly be overrated. We hear a great deal of the impovishment, ruin and havoc caused among families who form so many centres of the country's by the complex legal and economic conditions which have come into existence under British rule. Stable conditions are as necessary to the progress of the people as a stable propertied class is to the safety of the State, but the Government preoccupied in its work of political reforms has little time, still less the inclination, to grapple with the problem. Unwelcome suggestions from quarters not viewed with favour have either been received with impatience or pigeon-holed with official courtesy. As the questions I have indicated are of the utmost importance to the Mussulman community, I venture to suggest that you would move the Government to re-establish the arbitration courts which existed in the early part of the nineteenth century for the settlement of family disputes, and to induce the ordinary courts of justice to discourage family litigation. This, I submit, will not conduce to the benefit of one community only, but to that of all, and ought to receive the support of every friend of the Indian people, irrespective of creed and race. I know that the Government derives a large income from court fees, which some people regard as a taxation on justice, and that you may probably by your proposal rouse the opposition of large and powerful interests. But do not allow yourselves to be discouraged by the failure of your first attempt; go on hammering at the gate until you have gained admittance.

As a corollary to the above proposition, I strongly urge the formation of co-operative associations for mutual help, whose first duty should be to save Mahommedan families, so far as possible, from disruption, and in the last resort to 'buy in' so to speak, Mussulman estates. I believe it is perfectly feasible and practicable to devise a system of co-operative work of this kind on strict business lines; and I would commend its consideration to the Economic Section of the League, to which I shall presently refer.

WORK, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

My remarks so far relate to the sections of our community who are fortu nate in the immediate possession of means and property and to whom the conservation of such means is important. But there is a large body to whom its acquisition forms the spur to activity; they seek your assistance for finding outlets for their energies or for showing them the way for the employment of their talents and industry. The legal profession is overcrowded and many have taken to it who have little aptitude for its initial drudgery and constant assiduity. State service affords but a narrow field of occupation, and it is already held largely by representative of other communities whom it would, in any circumstances, be difficult to dislodge. Why should you not look out for other avenues to means and prosperity ? Your forefathers never condemned trade, commerce, or any form of industry. Kings applied themselves to learn handicrafts. Viziers were merchants. The greatest scholars, scientists and poets had some vocation. The Prophet himself constantly preached the dignity of labour.

The training of your youths, especially in upper India, in Bengal and in the Punjab, has been mostly academic, either with a view to State service or to the pursuit of law. Your educational institutions, I trust, will now realize the necessity of giving an important place in the curriculum of their studies to technical education. The Karachi Islamia College, in the establishment of which I had some little part, has already set the example. Many fields of industry are lying mostly untouched by our people : to yield a return they all require training and technical knowledge which your educational institutions could easily impart; and many need a certain amount of capital. Here again, the co-operative associations, proceeding not on charitable, but on strictly business lines, can come to the assistance of enterprising youths really in earnest to fight the battle of life.

Many of our young Hindu fellow-countrymen come to England to study poultry-farming, agriculture, sericulture, horticulture, fruit-culture; to acquaint themselves with the secrets of leather and other industries; they go to Japan and the United States to learn practical engineering, chemistry and other departments of art and the applied sciences. This awakening among them to the demands of materials progress is as admirable as their awakening to political conceptions is extraordinary.

I cannot help viewing with regret, not unmixed with shame, the apathy

generally displayed in these directions by Mussulman youths. Want of means is often urged as the chief reason that prevents them from engaging in these studies. But surely our rich men whose charitable instincts and interest in the welfare of their people are often roused by the visits to their districts of Lieutenant-Governors and other high officials, might devote, *fi-sabilillah*, a small part of their superfluity to found scholarships for promising Mahommedan youths to study, either in India or Europe, the subjects I have indicated, which later in life would be beneficial to them as well as to their country.

In the halcyon days of Islam, our man of wealth founded colleges and endowed scholarships to win the reward of God; in our times they do so to gain the approval of the government official. Might we not with advantage go back to the old ideal ?

But even without the charitable feeling coming into play to any very large extent, it is possible to devise a system for assisting deserving students by which they would become not only virtually self-supporting, but the means of helping others following in their footsteps. The consideration of this also, as an eminently practical method of solving a difficult problem, I would commend to the Economic Section.

ECONOMIC COUNCIL

To carry out the programme I have briefly outlined. I suggest you should divide the Committee—I trust you will soon alter its designation and call it a Council—into sections, each charged with special duties and special functions. This will facilitate the accomplishment of the great work you have taken in hand—the political, material and moral regeneration of our people. Otherwise, the task is so stupendous that it will tax the collective energies of the entire League, and even then end in failure.

The divisions or sections that I would suggest would be the following : (1) Economic, (2) Political (3) Educational, and (4) Sociological.

(1) The Economic Section would be the most important, as certainly it should prove the most beneficent, if properly organized and carefully and consistently worked. I have already indicated its duties.

(2) The Political Section's activities are easy to define and can be usefully employed to the advantage of our people if it is conducted on the broad lines already laid down.

(3) The Educational Section should co-operate with the Economic Section in carrying into effect the improvements in Mussulman education in directions which have hitherto been either neglected or considered of minor importance. It can hardly trench on the functions of the Educational Conference, which fulfils, a special function, and does not concern itself with economic questions.

(4) The functions of the Sociological-Section would possess as much importance as those of the Economic Section. It would concern itself with all questions of social and domestic legislation which affect the well-being of the people, especially the Mussulmans, and social problems of moment and

interest to our people. Many such subjects have arisen in Mussulman society within recent years; but in the absence of a communal organization to deal with them more or less effectively, they have been for the time being, put aside to the detriment of the community.

The preservation of Mahommedan institutions would naturally pertain to this Section.

In this connection, I would observe that so far as I can judge there can be no possible objection to persons holding offices under Government from serving on any of these Sections, save perhaps the political, which after all is only political in name, as the great object of our organization is to co-operate with the administration, not merely in the maintenance of law and order, but also in the promotion of the general interests of the country. But whatever technical difficulty may be felt in paid officials of Government serving on the political Section, there cannot, it seems to me, be any objection to their associating themselves with the other Sections, the main object of which is economic progress and development.

Working thus by sections or compartments, it would be possible to obtain far more satisfactory results and certainly a larger measure of success than would be the case if the carrying out of the programme were entrusted to the General Committee. In my experience, practical work is more effectively and expeditiously accomplished by small bodies of competent and earnest people; it is only when they have arrived at some definite conclusion that it should be submitted for the confirmation of the General Committee. I recommend the adoption of this system not only to the Central League, but also to the provincial branches and cognate organizations. After all, the actual application of the measures we decide to adopt for benefiting our people will rest with the provincial Leagues, and the amount of success we attain will depend on their energy and loyalty of purpose. They are, or at least should be, in touch with the people whom the work we undertake concerns; they are acquainted with their real needs and requirements, with the local conditions and circumstances. Where information is wanting, it would be their duty to obtain it. The provincial League will therefore, be the genuine and truly effective machinery for putting our programme into operation, and we must rely on them for consistent and continuous efforts in the directions indicated. In fact, without their help it would hardly be possible to do much for the progress of the Mussulman community. So far they have given whole-hearted support to the Central League; and I trust the solidarity that has existed so long will always be maintained. It is essential, however, that there should be absolute loyalty on all sides and the subordination of individual interests to the commonweal. It is only thus that we can hope to regain for our people the position in the internal economy of India to which they are legitimately entitled by their numbers and the virility of their character.

Gentlemen, I fear I have trespassed too long on your indulgence. But the subject is of such incalculable importance that I have felt it my duty to lay

my suggestions before you at some length.

May I venture to make one more remark ? Pray do not think any task too great or any work too unworthy for your energies or activities.

Please remember the words of one of our own sages :

Keep your aims high, so that before God and his creatures
May your work be estimated according to your aims.

In conclusion, I invoke to Almighty's blessings on you and your endeavours.

Mian Mohammad Shafi then announced, amidst cheers, that His Highness the Aga Khan had been pleased to make a permanent annual grant of Rs. 4,000 to the All-India Muslim League, besides Rs. 1,600 to the London Branch. This brought the morning's sitting of the League to a close.

SECOND SITTING

In the afternoon sitting, owing to the temporary absence of the President, Mr. Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy was called to the Chair. He moved the first resolution from the Chair which ran as follows :

RESOLUTION I

The All-India Muslim League places on record its deep sense of appreciation of the just and beneficial Scheme of Reform embodied in the India Councils Act and the regulations framed thereunder, and offers, on behalf of Indian Mussulmans, its grateful thanks to the Government, and assures it of their cordial co-operation with the Government and other communities for the success of the scheme.

Mian Mohammad Shafi, Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhry, Mr. Yakub Hasan, Syed Wazeer Hassan and Mr. Masudul Hasan spoke in support of the propositions, and it was unanimously carried amidst great enthusiasm.

Mian Mohammad Shafi, in supporting the resolution, said that they were all united in thinking—and he was perfectly certain that non-Muslims would agree with him—that the best interests of the country would be served by raising the political condition of the Mahommedans to the level of that of the other communities. It was essential that the Mahommedans, who suffer owing to numerical disadvantages, should be accorded preferential treatment by means of separate representation, and this could not be obtained unless they had absolute and unqualified control of their elections. To his mind, without separate representation, the most perfect system of representative Government would be unworkable and injudicious in a country that suffered from the unhappy internal conditions that prevailed in India. He had not a shadow of

doubt that participation in the mixed electorate was harmful to the best interests of our community.

He added : 'I do not know how you feel, but when I contemplate the reality of the disappointment which has been felt by the Mahommedans of the Punjab at the denial to them of the right of separate representation on the Provincial Council, in spite of the fact that the need for it was more insistent here than elsewhere, I look upon such a policy as not only in the highest degree prejudicial to Punjabi Mussulmans, but also as exceedingly impolitic. But keeping in view the definite recognition of the position of the Indian Mussulmans by the Government, as an integral but distinct part of the Indian population, I must thank and cordially thank the Liberal Minister and the large-hearted Viceroy for redeeming, to a large extent, the pledges given to the Indian Mussulmans.'

Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhry, supporting the resolution, said : 'The resolution just moved has my hearty support and sympathy. It is meek and proper that we should accord our heartful thanks to the Government and to the statesmen who helped to launch the Reform Scheme granting us enlarged Councils in India. I shall, however, with your permission, take the opportunity of laying before you the apparent defects in the Scheme as affecting the Provincial Councils of Eastern Bengal and Assam. Four seats by separate election have been allotted to Mahommedans out of 23 non-official seats. The chances are decidedly poor and quite uncertain for the Mahommedans to expect seats through mixed election. The reason is apparent. The voters to the local boards and municipalities are either tenants of Hindu Zemindars or indebted to them for loans, and as such they cannot but vote for the Hindus. So there will be practically four Mahommedans to 11 Hindus, when four seats are given away to Europeans and four by nomination. This meagre distribution of seats is not in full accord with the pledges given by Lords Morley and Minto as far as our Province is concerned. The number allotted to us is by no means any approach to the numerical proportion, not to speak of the political importance of the community. The Mahommedans there are about two-thirds of the population, and yet only four seats have been allotted to them by separate election, as I do not count upon the chance seats through mixed electorates. We fail to get the numerical proportion of seats which ought to be at least 10 instead of four. Over and above this, our claim on seats for political importance and defence of the Empire has been ignored. In the last election, it may be argued, the Mahommedans obtained two seats through electorates; but that was due to apathy and indifference on the part of Hindus. Notwithstanding their securing two seats each by mixed electorates, two seats by nomination and four by separate electorates, the Mahommedans were in the minority of 8 to 10 with the Hindus. As soon as the agitation ceases, things will be very different, and it will be difficult for Mahommedans to obtain seats through mixed electorates. To satisfy our just claims, a due and adequate number of seats should have been allotted not only in proportion to numerical strength, but

even in excess of that number, owing to the political importance of the community and its contribution to the defence of the empire. Our leaders in India and England have done enough to bring these facts to the notice of the authorities and we should now accept the Scheme and co-operate with the Government.'

Mr. Yakub Hasan observed that the Government had always been exceedingly solicitous of Mahommedan interests and actuated by the best of motives. The Mahommedan community, on the other hand, had all along reposed immense trust in its justice and beneficence and would continue to do so. The grant of separate representation to the Mahommedans opened a new era in the political life of the country and safeguarded the interests and the rights of the Mahommedan minority. It was clear that if the Mahommedans were a distinct community and had distinct interests, they should be placed in a position to safeguard their interests properly. He agreed with the President in heartily thanking the Government for redeeming the pledges given to the Mahommedans.

Syed Wazeer Hasan, in the course of his speech, remarked that Muslim loyalty was a bulwark for the British Power, and that their political importance was entirely independent of their religion.

Mr. Masood-ul-Hasan, in supporting the resolution, said that the claim put forward by the Mahommedans was not a new one, and it had been made clear at every stage of the Reform Scheme that they would be satisfied with nothing less than full separate representation. He was glad to observe that the claims of Mahommedans to special treatment on account of their political importance and numerical strength had been practically admitted by the just and benign Government, for which the community was deeply grateful to it. The only thing that made him unhappy was the disappointment felt by the Punjabi Mussulmans at the denial to them of the right of separate representation on the Provincial Council. It was the earnest prayer of the Muslim community that the Government be pleased to bear this point in mind on the occasion of the next election, and that steps be taken to remove an obvious anomaly.

The way in which the proposition was discussed showed that the members were animated by a sense of deep loyalty in acknowledging their gratitude to the Government for the recognition of their rightful position in the Empire. They refuted the assertion, made in some quarters, that they had received special favours from the Government, arguing that once the principle of communal representation was accepted, their representation must be adequate and effective. As Syed Ameer Ali had said, any attempt, open or covert, to curtail or modify the concessions that had been made to the Mahommedans or to alter any settled fact would be deeply resented by the community.

RESOLUTION II

The second resolution was also moved by Mr. Fazulbhoy, and ran as

follows :

The All-India Muslim League expresses on behalf of the Indian Mussulmans its great abhorrence of the anarchist movement manifesting itself in some parts of India, emphatically condemns the dastardly outrages recently committed at Ahmedabad, Nasik and Calcutta, and appeals to all patriotic citizens to actively co-operate with the authorities in up-rooting the evil from the soil of India.

In support of the proposition, Mr. Fazulbhoy, made a thoughtful and forcible speech condemning anarchy and appealing to Hindus and Mahommedans to discover the root of the evil and to eradicate it for the safety and honour of the country. He emphatically asserted that the time had arrived when they should adopt immediate and effective measures to correct the manners and morals of Indian Youth. He said :

I am sure that the resolution which I have the pleasure of moving is in full accord with the duties, sentiments and interests of not only the members of the League and the Mussulman community, but of the entire loyal population of India who look with horror and abhorrence on the dastardly deeds of a few anarchists, who have disgraced the whole of the Indian nation in the eyes of our rulers and the civilized world. It is impossible to speak with restraint about a criminal like Dhingra, especially when the ghastly picture of the foul and atrocious crime rises before our mental vision. I was an unhappy and painful spectator of the murder of my late lamented friends, Sir W. Curzon-Wyllie, who was in every sense of the word, a true friend of the Indians. His unfailing courtesy, his obliging nature, his genuine anxiety for the welfare of Indians, and the magnanimity of his heart were such as to make it impossible for us to believe that he could have even a single deadly enemy. It is not a cruel irony of fate that he should have been murdered by a man whom he was trying to save from the path of ruin ? As my memory goes back to the awful scene of the tragedy, I feel a thrill of pain and horror passing through my mind.

Until a few weeks back, the Bombay Presidency, which has given a lead in true Swadeshi enterprise to other provinces in India, was singularly free from any conspiracy, but the wicked plot to take the life of the Viceroy, whose only fault, if it can be termed a fault, lies in his instinctive liberality and innate kindness for Indians, revealed for the first time the unpleasant fact that the Presidency whose destiny is now being wisely shapped by one of the greatest and most sympathetic of pro-consuls that ever came out to India (Sir George Clarke) contained the poisonous germs of treason and anarchy. Through a divine and miraculous intercession, the plot miscarried and Lord and Lady Minto escaped unhurt. But within a few days of the shocking revelation of the attempted diabolic outrage, an officer who ought to have been respected and revered by Indians was treacherously murdered by a Brahman fanatic. I refer to the murder of the late Mr. A. M. T. Jackson, who was held in great esteem and popularity by all classes of the Indian

communities on account of his deep sympathy with them. What is the moral that we learn from these senseless crimes ? To those who give even superficial thought to the question, it must be obvious that the morals and manners of Indian youth require to be corrected, and to this end the attention of every patriot and well wisher of the country ought to be directed. Instead of futile laments over the irrecoverable past, we should, while there is yet time, set to work to find out the root of the mischief, which, in my opinion, lies in dangling, before raw and immature youth, an unattainable, impracticable, undesirable and mischievous ideal, namely, the attainment of Swaraj by driving out Englishmen from India. We all know that even if it were possible for Englishmen to retire from India to-day, it would mean terrible disaster to the country. The loss would be entirely ours. It would be a signal for the revival of bitter religious feud and racial strife and the consequent insecurity and plunder of life and property. It will undo the progress of years. Under the present circumstances, Swaraj for India is impossible, and if the guiding hand of the British were to be removed tomorrow, it would be absurd to think that without their aid, we could ever attain to that condition which is necessary for the attainment of Swaraj. For our intellectual and political progress and our economic and social salvation, British supremacy in India is a *sine qua non*. Our political enfranchisment must depend upon our fitness. If we are incapable of governing ourselves, and putting our own house in order, how can we expect to govern a country like India, with its teeming population, whose amazing diversity of religion, language, traditions and social custom are simply perplexing ? Our duty is then clear. It demands that if we are to share, the administration of the country with the rulers, we must also share the responsibilities attached to good citizenship.

We ought to co-operate with Government in putting down lawlessness, sedition and anarchy; and to do so, we should go to the root of the evil. It is undeniable that the cause of mischief is the seditious press and the repulsive secret teachings of the new school of thought which has captured the imagination of unimaginative students. The minds of youth are poisoned by exhibitions of religious fanaticism; and under the cover of religion, doctrines of racial rancour and racial hatred are instilled into the minds of pliant tools. To counteract the evil influences of the mischief-makers, we must in the first place insist on sound discipline and moral and religious training for our boys, so as to make them God-fearing and law-abiding citizens. We must establish, in conjunction with our Hindu compatriots, societies to combat revolutionary forces. This is not a time when we can sit silent. Nor is this the time for talk—that has passed long since—this is pre-eminently the time for action. Our patriotism, which has hitherto taken the form of passive obedience to the Crown and respect for the laws and institutions of the country, should be turned to active account in counteracting the evil influence of subtle enemies of Government, and therefore, of the country and society. Our common

enemies aim at the overthrow of the powerful and benevolent British rule which makes it possible for us to work out our own social and economic salvation without any interference, and which allows us to hold political meetings for asserting our rightful and legitimate share in the administration of the country, as is witnessed by to-day's proceedings in this imperial city, where the greatest of the great Mughal emperors, Akbar ruled in truly Oriental magnificence with civilized notions four centuries ago; and where seven years ago, our beloved king Edward, who will be known in history as Edward the Peace-maker, was proclaimed Emperor with great pomp and splendour. Our patriotism should take the form of teaching the people to take pride in being members of the mightiest Empire that the world has ever seen. Our dominating desire should be to strengthen British rule, and to inspire the people with feeling of affection for our rulers by deeds and words.

Our learned London President has suggested the formation of a political section or council of the League. May I suggest, in order usefully to employ the activities of the members of that section, that they should, in consultation with Government and such of the Hindu gentlemen as may be willing to co-operate with us, devise ways and means to combat the reactionary forces and to promote loyalty among the masses. By loyalty I mean a desire, a longing on our part to co-operate with Government in promoting the ordered development of the country and thereby securing peace and prosperity for the people. As our trusted leader, His Highness the Aga Khan, has forcibly pointed out, our loyalty should not be the basis for favours to come; not a cold abstract sentiment like the love of beauty and arts, but a constant, fixed and passionate desire for serving the country and helping the authorities in putting down, with a strong hand, the forces that end to submerge the Government lawfully established in the land. We must send out earnest, influential missionaries whose mission should be to spread the Divine Faith like calming oil on stormy seas. As regards the moral teaching which is necessary to develop the spiritual side, the parents of the pupils must help the teachers by seeing that the home atmosphere is untainted. There are people who say that they do not know in what way the Government want their help in putting down the anarchical cult. If, instead of laborious efforts in ransacking the Scriptures to prove—after foul murders have been perpetrated—that political crimes are not permitted, we adopt practical measures such as I have suggested, then I think, we will be very near to the solution of the complicated question. Teach our boys to stick to the ethical code of morality, teach them that loyalty is not only a passive virtue but an active force to help the Government in the promotion of beneficial measures for the good of the country. We should energetically strive to strengthen the hold of Indians on the affections of Englishmen, and we should persistently and effectively oppose the wild attacks of ultra-radical, both English and Indian, and interpret to the masses the benevolent intentions of the Government. This is all the more necessary because to the average Englishmen, the Indian Empire,

with all its glories and perplexities, is a sealed book. We must remember that one of the objects with which the League was formed was that, in view of the orgies of disloyalty actively displayed in some quarters the dignified policy of silent loyalty was no longer a paying game and that it was necessary to adopt some means of the most practical kind, which would act as an effective check on the sowing of wild seeds in this country.

In conclusion, I appeal to the sense of duty of both Hindus and Mahommedans to take effective action in co-operation with Government to stamp out anarchy by destroying the sources that induce evil thoughts and dangerous acts; to co-operate with the Government in ameliorating the condition of the masses and promoting measures of general welfare by the dissemination of agricultural, scientific, technical, industrial, commercial and literary education, and other measures of public utility sketched by His Highness the Aga Khan in the eloquent peroration of his forceful and noble speech.

Sahebzada Aftab Ahmed Khan seconded the resolution in an impassioned speech. He emphasized the necessity of explaining to misguided youths the suicidal folly of their position, so as to purge them of their dangerous ideas. At the same time he advised European officers in India to treat educated Indians with greater courtesy, as it was the educated section of the population that could best appreciate the blessings of British rule.

The resolution was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION III

The third resolution, proposed by Mian Mohammad Shafi and seconded and supported by Mr. Yakub Hasan and Moulvi Mahbub Alum ran as follows :

In view of the necessity and importance, under the existing circumstances of India, of each community being fully represented in the administration, the All-India Muslim League considers the number of Mahommedans employed in the various branches of the public service absolutely inadequate, and strongly urges the Government to give the Mahommedan community that share in the public service to which it is entitled by reason of its importance and numerical strength.

Mian Mohammed Shafi, in proposing the resolution, said that the number of Mahommedans employed in the various branches of the public service was absolutely inadequate. It was not the desire of the Mahommedans that undue favour should be shown to them or that the standard of qualification for public service be lowered in their favour to the prejudice of the efficiency of the administration; but it was essential for the proper adjustment of the political balance that, so long as qualified Mahommedans were available for the public service, they should be given their due proportion according to their importance and population.

Mr. Yakub Hasan, in seconding the resolution, said that it was not necessary for him to say much. It was an open secret that the Mahommedan share in the public service was far from satisfactory. Their interests had suffered partly by their silence and partly by the machinations of their neighbours, who were always harping upon the incompetence of the Mahommedan community. The Mahommedans should therefore unanimously demand that their share in the public service should be adequate, and should try to remove wrong notions about them.

Moulvi Mahbub Alum remarked that the number of Mahommedans in the judicial service of the Province of Agra was very inadequate, and that unless prompt and effective measures were taken to make up the difficiency, the Mahommedans would disappear from the higher grades of this most important branch of Government service. The allegation that the Mahommedans were not fit for public service was highly prejudicial to their best interests. A community which has a glorious past and which kept alive the flame of civilization for many centuries could not be said to be wanting in administrative ability.

The resolution was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

The meeting was then adjourned to Sunday morning.

THIRD SITTING

Deliberations were continued on Sunday, 30 January, with unabated interests. It was a busy day and much useful work was done, the sittings continuing till late in the evening, and the intense enthusiasm evinced on the previous day was maintained throughout.

In response to the eloquent appeal of the President, the Prince of Arcot, and His Highness the Aga Khan, handsome donations were promised to the League. Annual subscriptions amounting to Rs. 16,000 were promised and a lump sum of Rs. 8,600 was also subscribed.

The discussion embraced a wide range of practical subjects, which were presented in such an able, clear and temperate manner as to disarm criticism. Throughout the proceedings, a hopeful note of self-reliance and progress was sounded, and though the avowed object of the League is political, questions were discussed on non-sectarian lines, and the subject of education was brought to the forefront as a means of promoting our political and civic aspiration. Great stress was laid on the moral and religious training of Muslim Youth, so as to make them ideal and law-abiding citizens of the Empire, imbued with sentiments of loyalty to the British Crown. The inadvisability of confining the activities of the League to the political sphere alone was recognized by different speakers, who also urged the League to work out the social, industrial and economic emancipation of the Mussulmans by appointing an influential standing committee or separate sections of the League. It was suggested that the League could be divided into four sections : economic, political, educational

and sociological. The functions of each section were defined and means suggested to obtained satisfactory results from each. Continued stress was laid on the necessity of cordial and harmonious relations with the Hindus and other communities to promote the welfare of the country as a whole. These lofty ideals, however, did not prevent the meeting from, emphatically but respectfully, pointing out minor defects in the Reforms or demanding an effective and adequate representation of the Muslim community on municipalities and district boards.

ADOPTION OF NEW RULES AND REGULATIONS

At the outset, the meeting adopted the revised rules and regulations of the League and appointed Office bearers. At the annual session of the All-India Muslim League held at Amritsar, a Sub-committee was appointed to revise the rules of the League, but for various reasons no meeting could be held. This Sub-Committee met at Delhi under the Presidency of His Highness the Aga Khan on 27 and 28 January and after due deliberation proposed certain amendments in the rules, the changes proposed generally being verbal alterations. However, some of the amendments were of great importance, affecting as they did the Constitution of the League and its procedure. The number of Vice-Presidents was raised from 6 to 20, and of the members from 400 to 800. The amendments were read out in the meeting and unanimously adopted.

ELECTION OF OFFICE-BEARERS

The resolution electing His Highness the Aga Khan as President of the League for the next two years was passed by acclamation, and His Highness, in thanking the community for the honour done to him, promised to work for Muslim interests with singleness of purpose and whole-hearted devotion. On the motion of His Highness the Aga Khan, sixteen Vice-Presidents, one Honorary Secretary, and two Joint Secretaries were unanimously elected.

VICE-PRESIDENTS

1. Nawab Mushtaq Husain Viqar-ul-Mulk Bahadur. (United Provinces)
2. Raja Sir Mohammad Tasadduk Rasul Khan, K.C.S.I. (United Provinces)
3. Nawab Muhammad Abdul Majeed. (United Provinces)
4. Nawab Fateh Ali Khan Kazilbash, C.I.E. (Punjab)
5. Nawab Zulfikar Ali Khan of Maler Kotla. (Punjab)
6. Khan Bahadur Mian Mohammad Shafi, Bar-at-Law. (Punjab)
7. Prince Jehandar Mirza of Murshedabad. (Bengal)
8. Syed Ali Imam, Bar-at-Law. (Bengal)
9. Nawab Sir Salimullah Khan Bahadur, K.C.S.I. (Eastern Bengal)
10. Khan Bahadur Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhry. (Eastern Bengal)
11. Sir Ghulam Mohammad Ali, K.C.S.I., Prince of Arcot. (Madras)
12. Sir Currimbhoy Ebrahim, Kt.Bart. (Bombay)

13. Mr. Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy Ebrahim. (Bombay)
14. Khan Bahadur H. M. Malak. (Central Provinces & Bihar)
15. Mr. Abdul Aziz, Bar-at-Law. (NW Frontier Province)
16. Mr. Abdul Karim Abdus Shakoor Jamal. (Burma)

HONORARY SECRETARY

Moulvi Mohammad Aziz Mirza, Late Judicial, Police and General Secretary, Hyderabad, Daccan.

JOINT SECRETARIES

Haji Mohammad Musa Khan (Aligarh)
Moulvi Syed Wazeer Hasan, B.A., LL.B. (Lucknow)

The Honorary Secretary, Moulvi Mohammad Aziz Mirza, in thanking the community for the honour done to him, said :

I do not know how to thank you sufficiently for the honour you have done me by electing me Honorary Secretary to the All-India Muslim League. This is a mark of confidence which I highly value, but I can assure you that after a strenuous life spent in the service of my august master, His Highness the Nizam, I had settled down permanently at Aligarh to spend the evening (cries of 'No', 'No' and 'Say noon')—all right, I shall say the afternoon of my life—in the peaceful atmosphere of educational activity; but you have thought fit to throw me again into the troubled waters of politics with a mandate that I am once again to leave my hearth and home and make Lucknow my headquarters for the next two years. Whatever my personal feelings in the matter may be, and however diffident I may be of my humble capabilities, when I am assured of your goodwill, it will be my earnest endeavour to prove myself worthy of your confidence, and to do my duties without fear or favour and to the best of my abilities. With the beneficent help of a kind Providence and the never failing assistance of my revered chief, His Highness the Aga Khan, and the cordial and loyal co-operation of my friends and colleagues, both on the Central and Provincial Councils, I hope, if not to achieve, at least to deserve success.

Haji Mohammad Musa Khan, the Joint Secretary, in thanking the community for the honour done to him, briefly remarked that there was nothing that he prized so dearly as the service of the community.

The other Joint Secretary, Syed Wazeer Hasan, warmly thanked the community for the honour done to him, and said that he delighted to do anything for the good of the community, and that he never allowed himself to lose sight of the fact that the mission of the League was one of goodwill and amity. On the removal of the headquarters of the League to Lucknow, he would loyally co-operate with his chief, the Honorary Secretary, for the well-being of the community.

Moulvi Rafi-ud-din Ahmed then moved the following resolution :

The All-India Muslim League is of opinion that the principle of communal

representation should be extended to all self-governing bodies as promised by H.E. the Viceroy, in his reply to the All-India Mahommedan Deputation, and respectfully points out to Government that the adequate and effective representation of the Mahommedans is a necessary corollary of its application in the Imperial and Provincial Councils, and essential to the successful working of the Reform Scheme.

In a few well-chosen but emphatic words, Moulvi Rafi-ud-din spoke of the urgent necessity of introducing the principle of communal representation in municipalities local, and district boards on an effective and adequate scale. The proposition was seconded by Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhry who said :

I have much pleasure in seconding the resolution so ably moved just now. Our request all along had been for separate Mahommedan representation by Mahommedan electorates from the lowest rungs of the ladder, but this concession has only been allowed in the elections to the Imperial and provincial Councils. The application of this principle of communal representation follows as a natural sequence to be applied to the municipal, local and district boards after the concession made to us in connection with the Reform Scheme.

The Royal Commission on Decentralization, in dealing with election to rural boards, makes the following recommendation : 'As regards the methods of election, we are in entire accord with the Resolution of 1882, as to the impossibility of laying down any general system and the desirability of trying different schemes in different localities, including methods of proportional representation and election by castes, occupations etc. Having regard to the very different circumstances of different areas, we think it essential that the system adopted in each should be such as to provide for the due representation of different communities, creeds and interests. It has always been recognized that it is the duty of the British administration to protect the interests of the various communities in India, and to secure impartial treatment to all.' In the matter of municipal councils, they say : 'As regards methods of election, we need only repeat what we have said in the case of sub-district boards, that members should be chosen in ways best suited to local conditions, as laid down in the Government of India Resolution of May 1882. The main object should be to secure an effective representation of the various classes in each town, and the selection of fit representative.' It adds that 'There have been complaints that electorates are small, and that the elections do not excite interest or bring forward good men. A class system of representation, which exists in Rangoon and in some of the Punjab municipalities, seems to have worked fairly satisfactorily.'

The municipalities and local boards are initial steps in the ladder of self-government; and if separate Mahommedan representation is extended to these, there is not the least doubt that the principle of Mahommedan representation shall be greatly strengthened in elections to the Legislative Councils in India. To advance the plea that this is not feasible for want of qualified men in the

community, is, to say the least; and error of judgment. The necessary conditions of membership for municipal and rural boards being found in Mahommedans, why should they not have their own representative on these boards ? If the principle of denominational representation has been found to work successfully in the Punjab, there is no reason why the same principle applied to other places in India should not work equally well. Let there be a test, and we shall see how it works. A community which is making rapid strides in education and is growing in number and influence, and which is reckoned as constituting about one-fifth of the entire population of India, deserves adequate representation on municipal and rural boards. What functions, pray, do these boards discharge ? Do they not deal with such important matters as the construction and maintenance of municipal buildings, roads and communications, preservation of health, educational needs and, at times, the religious concerns of the localities ? And why should not therefore the Mahommedan rate payers have adequate representation on these boards and participate in local self-government ? Reasons and our requirements demand that they ought to.

In most municipal areas, however, the Mahommedans may not stand a good comparison with the other classes in point of number and taxes, but the political importance of the community and their local needs should be taken into consideration in the rural areas of these boards. The Mahommedans in our Province (Eastern Bengal) are in an overwhelming majority, but they are represented by small minorities in comparison with the other classes. You may ask why ? The voters are very much influenced by Hindu zemindars *mahajans* and pleaders, to whom the Mahommedans are greatly indebted and who accordingly exercise control over the elections to these boards. The voters in some cases are also influenced by Mahommedan zemindars who are themselves under the influence of money-lenders. To simplify matters and to remove all such stumbling blocks, the number of Mahommedan electorates, ought to be fixed.

His Excellency Lord Minto has already indicated his approval on this point in his reply to the Deputation that waited on him at Simla in 1906. I quote the portion of his reply for information : 'The pith of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that, in any system of representation, whether it affects a municipality, a district board or a Legislative Council, in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organization, the Mahommedan community should be represented as a community. I agree with you, gentlemen, that the initial rungs in the ladder of self-government ought to be found in the municipal and district boards, and that it is in that direction that we must look for the gradual political education of the people.'

The provincial governments should therefore in every case fix the number of Mahommedans entitled to seats on municipal and rural boards not only in proportion to their numerical strength, but in relation to their political importance, status in society, local influence and special requirements, and

elect them by separate Mahommedan electorates.

The resolution was supported by Sheikh Abdul Qadir, who remarked that it was high time for the benign Government to protect the interests of the Indian Mussulmans and to secure impartial treatment for them. They were until recently a negligible quantity in the administration of the country, but modifying circumstances showed that they deserved more than what was done for them as law-abiding citizens. Their interests could never be safeguarded unless the principle of separate representation were introduced in municipal and district boards.

Syed Raza Ali, supported by Mr. Mohammad Yakub, proposed an amendment to the effect that for the words 'speedy extension of the principle', the words 'adequate and efficient representation of the Mahommedans' should be substituted.

The amendment was accepted, and the resolution, as amended, was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION V

The League then passed the following resolution of Urdu as a vernacular of India :

> The All-India Muslim League deplores the attempts made in certain quarters to damage the importance of Urdu as the principal vernacular of India and regards the preservation and advancement of the Urdu language and literature as essential for the general progress of the country.

Sheikh Abdul Qadir, in proposing the resolution, said that no single factor had contributed more largely to the formation of national sentiments and ideas than the Urdu language. It is, he said, the only language which is understood by the educated classes all over India. The search after another common language looks like the digging of a well for drinking water when the Ganges flows by and leaves your feet. The need for Urdu has been felt on a wide scale by travellers and merchants in every part of India. Any practical step to be taken in the direction of supplying the need must depend upon the number of persons who feel the need. No one would think of learning a language if he could make no use of it except once in a pilgrimage, twice or thrice in a life-time, or to write a few letters in a year to a merchant in a neighbouring province. Urdu is in evidence not only in Government offices, in markets where articles of foreign manufacture are sold, but is also depended upon for inter-provincial business transactions. Even foreign languages are daily borrowing the names of commercial stuffs from Urdu. In a way Urdu is widening the circle of its operation and enriching foreign literature. Even in pure and faultless Hindi, Urdu words are largely adopted because no other vernacular can take the place of Urdu as the common language of India. Very often words used in newspapers and books written in pure Hindi are so out of

the way that they are intelligible only to those who know Sanskrit. Urdu is the only language which is read and spoken both by Hindus and Mussulmans. Any attempt to damage its importance, he said in conclusion, would be suicidal to the best interests of the progress of India.

Kazi Kabiruddin, in seconding the resolution, said that the study of Urdu should be encouraged and all attempts to damage its utility should be boldly faced. It was highly desirable, on both patriotic and sentimental grounds, to encourage Urdu, the common medium of communication, by holding periodical conferences and creating competent bodies to look after its progress.

The resolution was also supported by Moulvi Mahbub Alum, who remarked that Urdu was the *lingua franca* of India, a fact which its most determined opponents could not deny. He observed that the development of the Muslim community was synonymous with the preservation of the Urdu language.

The resolution was put to the vote and adopted unanimously. The meeting was then adjourned to the afternoon.

FOURTH SITTING

This sitting was taken up with the consideration of the remaining resolutions, most of the speeches being delivered in Urdu.

RESOLUTION VI

Mr. Mohammad Ali moved the following resolution :

The All-India Muslim League expresses its admiration of the intense patriotism, courage and self-sacrifice of the Indians in the Transvaal, who are heroically suffering persecution in the interest of our country, and appeals to all Indian Mussulmans to help the cause of Indians in the Colonies with funds and in other ways. The League most respectfully but earnestly urges upon Government the necessity of prohibiting the recruitment of indentured Indian labour for the South African Union as a measure of retaliation, so long as any South African Colony adheres to the present selfish policy and denies to His Majesty's Indian subjects their just rights as citizens of the Empire. The League considers it its bounden duty to draw the attention of the Imperial and Indian Governments towards the grave consequences of Colonial Legislation based on racial distinctions humiliating to His Majest's Indian subjects, and earnestly appeals to the Imperial importance to obliterate racial distinctions in political life within the Empire.

Mr. Mohammad Ali, in moving the resolution, forcefully pleaded the cause of Indians in South Africa and strongly condemned the policy of the Colonial Government based on racial distinction which was humiliating to His Majesty's Indian subjects. In a fluent and eloquent speech, he pointed out that as anarchy could not be wiped out by resolutions, so the grievances of

Indians in the Transvaal could not be removed by pious wishes. Government must take active measures to help the loyal Indian community and persuade the Colonial Government to put an end to the insulting treatment to which Indians were being subjected by the Boers. If all other means failed, he urged upon the Government the necessity of prohibiting indentured Indian labour for South African Colonies as a mild measure of retaliation.

In feeling and pathetic terms, Mr. Zahur Ahmed seconded the proposition, expressing the admiration of the League for the patriotism and self-sacrifice of the Indians in Transvaal and appealing to Mussulmans to help their compatriots to the Colony.

Mr. Henry S. S. Polak, delegate of the South African Indians, also delivered a stirring and illuminating address. He stated that originally a deputation of four, including a Mahommedan, a Hindu and a Parsi, was arranged for India, but three of them were arrested and imprisoned to preclude the possibility of their coming out to India. In condemning the Anti-Asiatic legislation on racial and religious lines, he explained how it was directed against the Mahommedan but not the Christian or other subjects. He also referred to the prohibition of the entry of highly cultured Indians, including barristers, doctors, graduates and priests. Three thousand imprisonments with hard labour had taken place in three years, and the lot of these prisoners was exceedingly hard. They had submitted to all sufferings and indignities rather than take upon themselves the humiliation of being treated as coolies. There were two ways to help them practically; first by stopping indentured labour and secondly by contributing funds.

The resolution was then put to the vote and adopted unanimously.

A donation of Rs. 1,000 to the Transvaal Indians was announced from the League Funds. A further sum of nearly Rs. 2,000 was promised by members of the League for the same purpose, Khan Bahadur Sheikh Ghulam Sadiq and Khan Bahadur Adamjee Mamoonji each contributing Rs. 500.

RESOLUTION VII

Mr. Mohammad Yakub moved the following resolution :

The All-India Muslim League respectfully urges on the Government the necessity of instituting a thorough enquiry into and the preparation and the publication of the statement of the number, general purposes and manner of administration of Mahommedan endowments designed mainly for the public benefit.

Khan Bahadur Ghulam Sadiq seconded the resolution, which was put to the vote and adopted unanimously.

RESOLUTION VIII

The next resolution recognizing the necessity of immediate efforts for

raising of the Aligarh College to the status of a teaching university was moved by Mr. Aftab Ahmed Khan. The resolution ran as follows :

> The All-India Muslim League strongly reiterates the necessity of a separate Mahommedan university of their own for the Indian Mussulmans and emphasises the desirability and advantages of raising the M.A.O. College, Aligarh, to the status of such a university.

In moving the resolution, Mr. Aftab Ahmed Khan remarked that in spite of the occasional ups and downs to which every individual in every society is subject, he was happy to be able to say that we had every reason to congratulate ourselves on the increasing interest that is being shown in the foundation of a Mahommedan university, which we all have at heart, and for which we have been labouring strenuously for so many years. We had special reason for congratulating ourselves on this occasion, for there had been, through God's blessings, a national awakening in all directions, such as we never had the good fortune of experiencing before. The whole of the Muslim community is now swayed by a new spirit, he said, and it seems as if it has pleased the Great Dispenser of all events to bring the community at last out of the gloom in which it has remained plunged for centuries. It is a hopeful sign of the times that even our political organization has taken up the question of raising the Aligarh College to the status of a Mahommedan university. From all that is happening around us, we may well take heart and count on a great future awaiting our community. He added that it rests with us individually and as a body, to lead our cause to a glorious victory. As we will, so shall we win. We are advancing a step further every year. We find our movement gaining fresh vitality and breaking down, one after another, the barriers in its way. He felt convinced that our work of nation-building had commenced in right earnest, and he had no doubt that the scheme of raising the Aligarh College to the status of a Mahommedan university would soon become an accomplished fact, if every individual of the community tried his level best to achieve the desired end by raising funds for it.

Kazi Kabiruddin, in seconding the resolution, remarked that as an increased interest was being taken in the question of a suitable Mahommedan university by aristocrate, lawyers, merchants and other influencial men of the community, there should not be the shadow of a doubt that in the near future the necessary funds would be raised. Our destinies, he said, lie in our own hands. It is when we are able to rouse ourselves to the sublime consciousness of our privileges as a race that contributed to the progress and civilization of the world that we shall know how to work out our destinies as a nation. What must be common to us all is a vigorous and well-sustained action by every member of each section, not simply by preaching what ought to be done, but also by his individual example in carrying out the great object which we all have in view.

The resolution was carried amid prolonged cheers.

RESOLUTION IX

Moulvi Mohammad Aziz Mirza then took up the next resolution, which ran as follows :

In view of the disintegration of Mahommedan families consequent on the misinterpretation of the Mahommedan Law of family *Wakf* and the disastrous effects resulting therefrom to the well-being of the community, it is necessary for the Legislature to enact some measure to allow the Mussulman Law of *Wakf* to take its course in favour of the land-owner's family and his descendants, with any safeguards that may be considered expedient against the perpetration of fraud.

In moving the resolution he spoke as follows :

In an assembly of learned Mahommedans which includes so many legal luminaries, I think it is hardly necessary for me to say anything to commend this resolution to you. It is a fact patent to you all that owing to various causes, while other communities have been, under the aegis of the British rule, making progress in material prosperity, the Mahommedans have been going from bad to worse; and great and well-to-do families, which at one time commanded the respect of the community, have fallen on evil days and their patrimony has passed out of their hands. No doubt this is to some extent due to the general demoralization of our community and the degeneration of its individual members; but whatever may be the causes, it has been helped on by the singular misinterpretation of our laws by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. While the Mahommedan law of inheritance secures the equal distribution of wealth, our divine law giver, with wonderful prescience, by providing for the making of endowments in favour of one's own family and descendants, secured us from the dangers of infinite subdivisions. If I were to dwell upon the legal sanction of this enactment in favour of family endowments and quote to you the sayings and the practice of our divine law-giver and the dicta of our jurisconsults, perhaps I should take days to discuss the whole subject before you, but I shall only refer you to the writings of the Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali, Khan Bahadur Moulvi Mohammed Yusuf and Shams-ul-Ulema Moulvi Shibli Nomani, who is fortunately present here and will address you presently.

With regard to the decision of their Lordships of the Privy Council, I need only remark that it is based on a misapprehension due to the misinterpretation of the word 'charity' which according to English notions must entail some spirit of self-sacrifice. But according to the provisions of Mahommedan Law the word 'charity' is used in a much wider sense, and it also includes benefactions in favour of one's own descendants. Our Prophet, by his precept and example, laid down that it was as much a meritorious act to make provisions for one's own family as it was to help the poor and needy; and so long as this is the Mahommedan Law, nobody has the right to say that our Prophet could not have meant what his words signify. The

materialistic West may not be able to appreciate the merit of *Sawab* consequent upon making provision for one's own family, but we of the East prefer spiritual merit to all materialistic considerations. It has been acknowledged by the highest authorities that family endowments are perfectly legal under Mahommedan Law, and that lands are held under it in the purely Mahommedan countries of Egypt, Turkey, Persia and Arabia; but in face of the decision of the Privy Council, it is necessary that an enactment should be passed allowing the Mahommedan Law to take its course.

The question was taken up in a modified form by the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan when he was appointed a member of the Viceroy's Council and brought forward a bill on the subject; but owing to lack of support from official quarters it fell through. It was afterwards submitted to Government by the Mahommedans Association of Calcutta, but the Government replied that the passing of such a law would be full of mischievous consequences. But this, gentlemen, is a reply which shows that the real question at issue has not been seriously taken into consideration. We never asked the Government to enact a law which did not form part of our personal law; what we felt was that when the application of our own law in personal matters has been secured to us and to it has been proved by our law-books and the practice of purely Mahommedan countries that the doctrine or *Wakf-alal-Aulad* is a part and parcel of our law, there is no reason why it should not be allowed to take its course simply because the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council—a body commanding our highest respect but, like everything human, liable to commit mistakes—has laid down that the doctrine of family *Wakf* forms no part of Mahommedan Law. We do not ask Government for anything that does not form part of our law; our only request is to remove the hinderances that have been so arbitrarily, placed in its way and to allow it to take its proper and unimpeded course. We have no objection to Government devising such checks as may be deemed necessary to prevent the perpetration of fraud, but there is no reason why a decision which sets such an important provision of our law at naught should be allowed to stand in the face of our undoubted statutary right.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Zahur Ahmed and carried *nem con.*

RESOLUTION X

The President then moved the following resolution from the Chair which was unanimously adopted.

The All-India Muslim League places on record its appreciation of the great services rendered to the Mahommedan cause by His Highness the Aga Khan, G. C. I. E., and assures him of its continued confidence and trust in his statesmanship and in his leadership of the Mussulmans of India.

RESOLUTION XI

Moulvi Mohammad Aziz Mirza proposed the following resolution, which

was seconded by Mian Mohammad Shafi and adopted with enthusiasm :

The All-India Muslim League, representing the Indian Mussulmans, offers its grateful thanks to the Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali, C. I. E. for his valuable services rendered in defence of Mahommedan rights in connection with the Reform Scheme, expresses its continued confidence in his leadership and congratulates him on his elevation to His Majesty's Privy Council.

Moulvi Mahommad Aziz Mirza, in moving the resolution, briefly referred to the distinguished services so unselfishly rendered to the Muslim cause by Syed Ameer Ali, specially in connection with the new Reforms. Had he not come to their help at the critical moment, the Muslim community would have been nowhere. He also gave expression to the universal satisfaction which the elevation of Syed Ameer Ali to the Privy Council had given rise to, not only in India but also in almost all the other Mahommedan countries.

His Highness the Aga Khan, in thanking the Reception Committee, said that the present Session constituted an important meeting of the League, for which Imperial Delhi was the fittest place. This was followed by concluding remarks from the Chair.

The President of the Session, the Prince of Arcot, remarked that never were the highest qualities of Muslim manhood more needed than now : courage, patience and endurance, unflinching allegiance to law and order coupled with an undying faith in the destinies of the Indian Mussulmans and their country. The Delhi Session of the League, he observed, unmistakably infused a new life into Muslims and guided their energies into useful and patriotic channels. Let them take advantage of the situation and reap and abundant harvest.

FIFTH SITTING

Though the deliberations of the Muslim League officially came to a close on January 30, another meeting of the League was held on Monday.

In closing the proceedings, the President Mr. Fazulbhoy recounted the blessings of British rule, and eloquently pleaded for active measures to check the subversive tendencies visible in some parts of India and to wipe out the roots of evil and mischief which were created to cause confusion and disorder in the country and to embarrass Government. The salvation of India, he said, lay not in political franchise alone, but in the development of industries by the promotion of scientific and technical education. The proceedings of the League testified to the awakening of Mussulmans and a desire for progress and enlightenment on their part. It was a period of transition and the alertness they had shown during the past year was a happy augury for the future.

Source : Proceedings of the Third Annual Sessions of the All-India Muslim League held at Delhi. Published by the office of the All-India Muslim League, 9 July 1910.

82

MUSLIM REPRESENTATION ON LOCAL BODIES : FINANCIAL SECRETARY, U.P., WRITES TO COMMISSIONER

The Secretary of State has accepted the principle that the Mahommedan community shall be secured in respect of its representation by the formation of an electorate confined to the community. In a speech on the question of modifying council regulations, delivered in the Council of the Governor-General on 24 January 1911, the Hon'ble Mr. Jenkins made the following statement :

'There is, however, one point on which I am authorized to make a definite declaration, and that is the question of separate representation for Mahommedans. Government have given the fullest and clearest pledges to Mahommedans, that they should have separate representation.' In dealing with the question of Legislative Council there was the important consideration that the system of election followed in the past has not given adequate representation to Mahommedans. But in discussing the question of election to municipal and district boards it is desirable to have regard to the actual experience of these provinces. According to the census of 1901, Mahommedans form 14 per cent of the population of the United Provinces. The Secretary of State fixed the number of Mahommedans who are to be elected to the Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor at four out of a total of twently elected members of 20 per cent. According to statistics collected in 1909, Mahommedan electors formed 23 per cent of the total number of electors for district boards in these provinces, while they included nearly 32 per cent of the elected members. In as many as twenty-nine districts out of forty-five the proportion of Mahommedan members was greater than the proportion of Mahommedans to the total population. It is of course, the case that conditions vary much in different districts and in a number of places representation of Mahommedans was clearly inadequate.

The Lieutenant-Governor has noticed with regret that the question of separate representation on district and municipal boards has given rise to some ill-feeling between the two communities, and he is desirous of coming to a conclusion on the question whether this principle should be recognised by the election rules in force in these provinces. I am to ask that you will obtain the opinion of municipal and district boards and of influential members of both communities throughout your division. In a separate letter you are being consulted as to the desirability of introducing a system of property qualification for electors of members for district boards. In that letter you have been asked to obtain statistics of the number of persons who would be qualified as electors separately for Mahommedans and for Hindus. A study of the statistics so obtained will be desirable in order that an idea may be

formed as to whether that system will give Mahommedans a satisfactory proportion of the electorate. But the Lieutenant-Governor also desires that statistics may be furnished in the form enclosed, showing the composition of the electorate for each municipal and district board as it stood when the elections for 1911, were held.

If on general grounds it is finally decided that a separate electorate should be formed for Mahommedans, it will be necessary to decide the principles on which the amount of representation to be given them shall be fixed. As shown above Mahommedans will ordinarily elect 20 per cent of the elected members on the Legislative Council, while their proportion in the general population is only 14 per cent. It may be suggested as a basis of discussion that if separate electorates are approved, the proportion of the total which should be reserved for Mahommedans shall be half as much again as the proportion which Mahommedans bear to the total population in the area under consideration. Thus in the case of a municipality in which Mahommedans form 8 per cent of the population it might be said that 12 per cent of the seats should be reserved for them. In the case of district boards it would be possible where Mahommedans form a considerable proportion of the population to apply this principle to single tehsils, but where Mahommedans are less numerous it may be necessary to group tehsils for the purpose of fixing a number of members.

In both cases it will be necessary to fix a maximum limit for separate representation, as the suggestion made above would give Mahommedans the whole of the places on a board where they form as much as 67 per cent of the population.

If it is found that the tentative scheme for a property qualification for electors to district boards will not give a sufficient number of Mahommedans, it will be necessary to consider whether special qualifications for Mahommedans should be fixed, as was done in the case of electorates to the Legislative Council, and I am to ask your opinion on this matter also, and what qualifications should be adopted.

A further question is whether Mahommedans shall vote in the general electorate, as well as for their own special members. This has been allowed in the case of elections to the Legislative Council. I am to point out that the problem is not so much to prevent double voting as to secure the adequate representation of important interests. In the case of Legislative Councils the Hon'ble Mr. Jenkins pointed out that the Government of India could not withdraw the principle of separate representation unless and until the Mahommedans themselves came forward and said that they no longer required the privilege. If Mahommedans are entirely confined to their own special constituencies it is most probable that there will be no opportunity in the future of testing the question whether Mahommedans can secure adequate representation in a mixed electorate, and their participation in this seems desirable for that reason also.

Source **: The Pioneer, 14 June 1911.**

83

LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING MUSLIM REPRESENTATION ON LOCAL BOARDS

The Government resolution on Muslim representation on Local Boards in these Provinces, circulated by Mr. Burn to Commissioners, has been the subject of adverse criticism in a large number of Hindu papers and has been disapproved of by some of the Hindu societies also. Some Hindus individually too have expressed dissatisfaction. I find that Mr. Burn has in very clear words recorded how the Decentralization Commission, the Secretary of State for India and the Hon'ble Mr. Jenkins have explicitly declared that Mahommedans shall have separate electorates. If I mistake not Lord Minto also made a definite promise to the same effect. It is true that Sir John Hewett did not definitely give his support to separate Mahommedan electorates for Municipal and District Boards. However, putting aside the opinions and promises of different personages, it may be profitable to judge from a practical as well as a critical point of view, whether (1) Muslims should or should not be separately represented on local boards; (2) if they should be, then on what principles. Hindus will agree with me that on account of acute tension between the two communities, election of Mahommedans will generally be impossible in wards or Tehsils where non-Muslims predominate and *vice versa*. This has been noticed in the elections of this year and I may say that later on, if elections are still carried on the existing rules, the results are bound to be disastrous to Muslim representation, on account of the predominance of Hindu electors in most places. It is hopeless to expect perfect concord or unity between the two denominations, which have so widely different and in some matters diametrically opposite thoughts, feelings and sentiments. Thus when Government foresees what turn the condition of affairs on local boards is likely to take, should it sit with folded hands or should its sense of justice and political wisdom constrain it to do what is absolutely necessary to keep the balance. If it was found by Government that the election of Hindus would be likely to be boycotted anywhere by a prepondering Muslim majority. I am sure it would protect the former in the same way as it has now proposed to safeguard the interests of Muslims. This idea is fully supported by the Government suggestion that a maximum limit should be fixed for Mussulman representation even in places where they predominate numerically. It is also no secret that Muslims do not expect fair treatment in the future under the present election rules. My Hindu friends will admit that the Mahommedans form an important factor in the administration of India. They are about to have a separate University. With the above facts before me I can come to no other conclusion, but that the Mussulmans must have separate electorates to secure for them adequate representation on local boards.

The solution of the second point viz., on what principle the amount of representation should be fixed, is full of difficulties. The feelings of Hindus generally seem to have been hurt by the Government proposal that (1) the proportion of the total which should be reserved for Mahommedans shall be half as much again as the portion which their numbers bear to the total population in any area under consideration; and (2) the Mahommedans may be eligible to vote in the mixed general electorates as well. The objection urged against No. 1 is that, there is no just cause for a preferential treatment of one community at the expense of another and in regard to No. 1 it is said that it unfairly gives to Mussulmans, practically double voting. Regarding the suggestion No. 1, my personal view is that as matters stand at present neither the Hindu nor the Muslim elected members as a rule take any special interest in the affairs of the smaller boards, which are virtually run by their chairman. In the bigger boards where the members have a real voice, the two communities very seldom come to loggerheads on any important question. It should also be realized that our Mahommedan friends generally have secured by their self-restraint dignity of behaviour in writing or speechifying and by practical wisdom shown on all political questions, the admiration of all right-minded persons of all castes and creeds. Their League is truly a power in India now and has influence beyond India also. It is known that they are a united body and as such are entitled to respect and consideration. They are in minority in United Provinces, being on the aggregate only 14 per cent of the total population and their representation according to their numerical strength will be quite insignificant and from the overwhelming majority of the other community they shall practically, have no voice in local boards and the Local Self-Government Act will be a dead letter to them. Keeping the above facts in mind and judging them matter from a political point of view, are they not entitled to some preferential treatment. Hence I do not think that Government is not justified in giving to the Mussulmans a representation, 50 per cent higher than their numerical strength warrants. It has a precedent for this in case of the Electorates for the Legislative Councils. Beside this, does this preferential treatment in any way harm the interests of the Hindu community? I go further and say, 'Will the Hindus really suffer even if the Mahommedans are given still larger representation than the one proposed by Government?' My reply is that they suffer no practical harm. On the other hand, if they gracefully fall in with the Government proposal noted in suggestion No. 1, they at once secure the goodwill of Mussulmans and thus sow the seed of future reconciliation, which Sir William Wedderburn's Committee of Peace and Union has hitherto failed to do. This proposal of Mr. Burn should, therefore, be hailed with thankfulness of heart and advantage thereof should be taken without the slightest hesitation if reconciliation with Muslims is really and sincerely the aim of our political leaders. My logic may be considered queer, but I implore that some consideration be given to it before it is condemned.

Coming to the question of plural voting as noted in suggestion No. 2,

I surmise that Government will drop it, if the voice of different Boards is against it; but if I have to say that I am unable to agree with Mr. Burn's opinion that by keeping a mixed general electorate, there will be an opportunity in the future 'of testing the question whether Mahommedans can secure adequate representation in a mixed electorate.' He notices the signs of the present time from his elevated position better than I do and it is useless to hope against hope that mixed electorates may give in future results satisfactory to all concerned. No Mussulman will now have any chance of success in any mixed electorate, where the Hindu element prevails. I beg to be excused for this plain speaking. Again, the continuance of these mixed electorates along with the separate ones for Muslims is bound to cause dissatisfaction and will bring about a state of affairs which will cause a great deal of bickering and discord between the two rival commuñities. I do not think the Muslims will press for mixed electorates in addition to the separate ones, if they can get adequate representation by the latter. Islam and Hinduism, speaking plainly, will ever remain twain. Again if the question of double voting for Mussulmans, falls to the grounds, there can be no necessity for detailed rules as to special preferential qualifications for Mussulman electors and one cause of heart burning will thus disappear. However, if the general mixed electorates do remain in existence, then there can be no doubt that the Government will see that the special qualifications for Muslim electors are not such as may make their numbers too excessive or too disproportionately large, but the best and easiest way of settling the Hindu-Muslim controversy is by abolishing the mixed electorates altogether and giving to Mahommedans adequate representation by separate Muslim electorates. The consequence will be that the present dissatisfaction and disagreement will disappear to a large extent. I crave, your indulgence to close this letter with a bit of advice to my Hindu brethren. They at times disagree with Government. Their watch word amongst themselves is disunion. I implore them to turn a new leaf now and begin to agree for good or bad with Government at least. I know that they as a body love the Government and its present head. Let concordance take the place of disagreement and then let the Hindus realise with pleasing sensation, what Tennyson felt when he wrote.

And blessings on the falling out
Which all the more endears
When we fall out with those we love
And kiss again with tears.

No more. The cynic goes back to his Tub.

Source : The Pioneer, 24 June 1911.

INDEX

Eminent scholar, Dr. Shan Muhammad (b. 1937) took his doctorate in Political Science from the University of Allahabad and has done pioneering researches in the nationalist movement in India. His publications include *Sir Syed Ahmad Khan : A Political Biography; Writings and Speeches of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan* and *Khaksar Movement in India.* Dr. Shan Muhammad's collection of documents on *The Aligarh Movement* (in three volumes) has been considered 'a boon to researchers to reach the basic materials'. The present study which runs into several volumes provides the results of his extensive study on the political attitudes of Indian Muslims in the present century.

ISLAMIC BOOK CENTRE

26-PAISA AKHBAR

ANARKALI, LAHORE

L